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HISTORY AND ILLUSTRATIONS  
OF THE  
LONDON THEATRES:  
COMPRISING  
AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE DRAMA IN ENGLAND;  
WITH  
*Historical and Descriptive Accounts*  
OF THE  
THEATRES ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN, DRURY LANE,  
HAYMARKET, ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE, AND  
ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE.

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By CHARLES DIBDIN, JUN.

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Illustrated with Engravings.

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AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE DRAMA IN ENGLAND;  
WITH AN  
HISTORICAL ESSAY  
ON THE  
THEATRE ROYAL COVENT GARDEN.

BY C. DIBDIN.

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AMONG the most attractive and rational amusements of polished society, the DRAMA must ever hold a pre-eminent distinction, where good sense and correct taste supersede bigotry and fastidiousness ; provided those upon whom the grave responsibility of authorship and management devolves, do not, in the contemplation of private emolument, forget the interest of the public ; nor the public, on whom the existence of the stage depends, forget that to patronise folly is to promote vice ; and that to compromise the interests of morality is to undermine the foundations of social happiness.

The degeneracy of the modern Stage is a subject often pertinaciously insisted upon ; and, although the accusation contains a portion of cant, the most zealous friend of the Drama must admit it to be not wholly deficient of truth. But human systems are incapable of perfection, and the utmost

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that fallible beings can accomplish is to render them as unexceptionable as their capabilities will permit; nevertheless, candour must allow that, however a modern *Dennis* may be supposed justified in his philippics, a modern *Collier* cannot ground his tirades on so substantial a foundation as his prototype.\* From about fifty years previous to Prynne's *Histrionastix* (1632), to the present time, has the licentiousness of the Stage been attacked; sometimes by ignorant prejudice, sometimes by rigid puritanism, and sometimes, it must be acknowledged, by enlightened piety. With a few writers, among whom was Collier, its reformation alone was the object in view; while the majority were, and are still, bent alone upon affecting that which their precursors accomplished during the Interregnum, namely, the abolition of Theatres.†

In the year 1579, all the players were driven out of the city, and their Theatres (in Gracechurch Street, Bishopsgate, and that near St. Paul's,) demolished; and in 1583, so furious an attack was made by the puritans on the Theatre, that Queen Elizabeth, at the earnest request of Sir Francis Walsingham, permitted twelve of the principal comedians in London to be selected and licensed, under the denomination of "*Her Majesty's servants*."‡ But although many writers and preachers have employed invectives and denunciations

\* "While our authors took these liberties with their wit, I remember the Ladies were then observed to be decently afraid of venturing bare-faced to a new Comedy till they had been assured they might do it without an insult to their modesty:—they came in masks."—*Cibber's Apology*.

† In 1578, plays were performed on Sundays and holidays, after prayer-time; but this custom was abolished about two years after; when the theatre itself was nearly suppressed.

‡ Among them were, Thomas Wilson, a famous clown, and Richard



against the Stage, it has found defenders in a majority of *writers* equal (saying the least) to their antagonists in learning, good sense, and piety; but in opposition to the *preachers*, I know of but one solitary instance, namely, the Rev. James Plumptre, B.D. Vicar of Great Gransden, who, in 1808, preached four Sermons at Great St. Mary's Church, Cambridge, upon the "Lawfulness of the Stage;"\* and to this Reverend Gentleman the professors of the Drama are, certainly, under no little obligation for his spirit and single-mindedness. —

This pertinacious objection to the Stage, however it may excite indignation in some, and fear, contempt, or pity in others, has been thought by many to be politically beneficial to it, for the restraint of licentiousness; in the same manner as perpetual and organised opposition in Parliament is considered essential to prevent the encroachments of arbitrary power.

The excesses of the Stage, like the soldiers which sprang from the Dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus, can only be destroyed by the power which produced them: the Stage was instituted for the benefit of the public, and its continuance depends upon the public will; consequently, with

Tarleton, so celebrated as a clown, that our ancestors thought they would "never look upon his like again."

Tarleton's head was used for a Sign. He is described as a paragon of "wondrous, pleasant, plentiful, extemporall wit." He was buried in 1588, at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, where many actors of that time were interred. Eight of the players, licensed as above, had each an annual salary of 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*

\* Dedicated to the Rev. J. Pearson, D.D., Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge; under whose sanction, and by whose advice, (according to Mr. P.'s preface,) the sermons were written, preached, and published.

that will, also, rests a corrective for its abuses. If manager, author, or actor, be reproached with the abasement of the modern Stage, the Prologue, written by Dr. Johnson, for Mr. Garrick, affords them a very pertinent reply :—

“ Ah, let not censure term our fate our choice,  
The Stage but echoes back the public voice.”

Previously to an Account of the THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN, (as that forms the first of the series of Theatres intended to be illustrated in this work,) it may neither be inapplicable nor unentertaining to give a brief History of the ENGLISH STAGE, from its origin to the present time; to trace it from rudeness to refinement, and from weakness to vigour; since, from observing by what gradatory means it has been improved, some notion may be formed, or principle acquired, favourable to its further advance towards perfection.\*

The earliest Dramatic entertainments in England were exhibited at the beginning of the twelfth century. They were of a religious kind, called *Mysteries*, or *Miracles*, founded upon the stories and miracles contained in both the Old and New Testaments, and were sometimes framed upon the most sacred mysteries themselves.†

\* The materials for this brief sketch have been derived from Stow's Annals, — the *Historia-Histrionica*, — *Roscius Anglicanus*, — Malone, — Steevens, — Cibber, — Reed, &c. &c.

† Subjects for these mysteries were, the Creation, Incarnation, Crucifixion, Descent into Hell, Miracles of our Saviour, &c.—Pope Pius II. wrote a mystery called “The Court of the King of Heaven,” which was performed in his presence.—The Descent of the Holy Spirit was imitated in “St. Powle's” (Paul's), by means of a white Dove, which descended from the dome.

The Devil was frequently one of the persons of the Drama; he was

In the time of William the Conqueror, trade was carried on principally by Friars,\* who, to entice people to their marts or fairs, used to employ jugglers, minstrels, buffoons, dancers, &c.; and these introduced so much licentiousness by their mummeries, that the clergy became alarmed for the morals of the public; and, in consequence, prohibited all such performances, and excommunicated the performers: but as the multitude then, as well as now, preferred doing what they pleased rather than what they ought, so little attention was paid to the prohibitions of the clergy, that, in order to educe good from evil, the Priests resolved to turn actors themselves; and for this purpose they formed new mysteries, and selected the best of those which had been produced, and performed them in churches and chapels, or in some selected spot near those sacred buildings. This practice continued till 1542, when Bishop Bonner prohibited the further junction of the sacerdotal and histrionic characters.

In, or about, the thirteenth century, the fraternity of Parish Clerks, (who had been incorporated by Henry III., in 1240,) performed plays of a scriptural kind.†

constantly attended by the Vice, or Clown, whose chief business was to play his satanic majesty tricks, and thwack him with his "wooden dagger" till he roared, which always excited bursts of laughter. Adam and Eve have been represented in a state of actual nudity: and so late as James I., (according to Winwood's History of the Stage,) a pastoral was played at Oxford, before the Queen and her women, in which some of the characters were "almost entirely naked." *Query*, Did they wear flesh-coloured coverings?

\* Charlemagne countenanced *trading* friars in France.

† This circumstance is corroborated by the following inscription upon a pump in Ray Street, Clerkenwell, London:—

"A.D. 1800, William Bound, Joseph Bird, Churchwardens.

"For the better accommodation of the neighbourhood, this pump was



After the clerical performers were forbidden to act, students, choristers, and others, even children, (called "Children of the Revels,") enacted these sacred mummeries, for they could scarcely be called better. Until 1328, they were performed in Latin; but in that year, though with great difficulty, the Pope was prevailed upon to suffer them to be represented in English.

About the time of Henry VII., mysteries were superseded by *Moralities*, the stories or plots of which were derived from moral and profane subjects; notwithstanding which mysteries were occasionally, though rarely, performed so lately as in the reign of Elizabeth. John Rastall, a learned topographer, and brother-in-law of Sir Thomas More, (*temp.* Henry VII.,) improved the Moralities, connecting with them scientific and philosophic purposes, under the impression that such compositions would increase the general knowledge, as the other kind did the manners, of society.\* It remained for the reign of Elizabeth, glorious to herself and triumphant for the nation in numerous felicitous instances,

removed to the spot where it now stands. The spring by which it is supplied is situated four feet eastward; and round it, as history informs us, the parish clerks of London, in remote ages, annually performed sacred plays. That custom caused it to be denominated Clerks'-well, and from which this parish derived its name." — In 1391, a mystery was performed here which lasted three or four days; and in 1409 another was acted at Skinner's-well, near Clerkenwell, which lasted eight days; the subject, the Creation of the World.

\* Stow says, mysteries were abolished in 1598, and public Theatres erected: and the continuator of Stow's Annals says, that sixty years before the time he wrote, which was in 1631, no less than seventeen public Stages, or common Play-houses, had been built in and about London: in which number he includes five inns, or common *osteries*, turned into play-houses in his own time; one cockpit; St. Paul's singing-school; one in Blackfriars; one in Whitefriars; and one, in former time, at Newington Butts.

to impart to the semi-barbarous Drama of the age a legitimate character; and to grace the histrionic annals of the country with the name of SHAKSPEARE, the great luminary of dramatic poesy, whose muse, (about 1590 or 91,) burst forth with meridian refulgence; when nature, truth, feeling, and dignity, took possession of that Stage which succeeding ages, with all their varied improvements in every other respect, have never equalled; and which, in all probability, the future, if it equal, will never surpass; a Stage which, in addition to the great Bard, boasted the muses of Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, and Massinger, who were contemporaries during part of Elizabeth's and James I.'s reigns.\*

The first approaches to regular Comedy and Tragedy were made in 1566, by *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, written by Still, (afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells,) and *Ferrex and Porrex*, written by Lord Buckhurst and Thomas Norton, and played the same year at Whitehall; for at that time there was no edifice in England appropriated solely to dramatic purposes; the Players were formed in companies under the protection of the court, the principal nobility, and others, whose servants they were called.

Theatres began to be regularly established early in Elizabeth's reign, though many plays were then performed in inn-yards;† but in 1574, Elizabeth granted license to James Bur-

\* Previous to Shakspeare, the principal dramatic authors were Greene, Lodge, Peele, Marlowe, Nashe, Lily, and Kyd, each of whom had a regular university education.

† The mode in which they were fitted up was as follows:—the galleries, which were one above the other, went round the exterior of the inn, in the yard; and the small rooms under them served for boxes; the area of the yard supplied the pit, (so called from the cock-pit,) where the common people stood on the stones, or earth; whence, it is said,

bage and others, to constitute a Company of Players, who were called the Queen's Servants : \* and in 1603, James I. granted another license to Lawrence Fletcher, William Shakspeare, and others, who formed the Company at the Globe ; at which

the term "groundlings," as applied to the common people, was derived : — to "split the ears of the groundlings," is an expression used by Hamlet. Part of the stage was placed under the roof of the gateway ; and the audience were admitted at the gate, under a part of the floor of the stage. The prices of admission to the theatres were, to the pit and galleries of the Globe and Blackfriars, sixpence ; to the others a penny or two-pence ; to the boxes of the former one shilling, raised afterwards to two shillings, and then to two shillings and sixpence : a more moderate charge being taken at the other theatres. Critics and other persons were, in the regular theatres, admitted on the stage, and paid one shilling, or sixpence ; those paying the former sum were supplied with stools, pipes, and tobacco ; for both men and women smoked in the theatre, read, or played at cards, before the play began, which was before twelve o'clock, and it generally finished at from three to half-past three. In 1667, they began at three, and in 1696, at four. The theatres were lighted with two brass branches, (similar to those used in churches,) which were suspended across the stage ; and the auditory was lit with cressets, or large open lanterns : in process of time the theatres were lit by candles in circular hoops, and sometimes the lights were wax. In 1775, Garrick, after his return from France, altered the mode of lighting to that now partially used, and wholly so previous to the introduction of gas. In Shakspeare's time the stage was covered with rushes, and was parted from the pit by palings ; the musicians, who chiefly played wind-instruments, sat in a box over what is now called the stage box, the orchestra obtaining its present position soon after the Restoration.

\* The license was granted to the five following persons : the rest of the company were retained by them : — James Burbage, John Perkyn, John Lanham, William Johnson, and Robert Wilson, servants of the Earl of Leicester. In their patent is a reference to the licensing of dramatic entertainments, or performances, by the Master of the Revels ; the fee for which was at that time £2. ; — it had formerly been about a quarter of that sum.



Theatre, and that at Blackfriars, all the plays written by our immortal Bard were, it is conjectured, exclusively performed; the audience of the latter consisting principally of the superior orders, while those of the former were composed of the middling and lower classes. Both the above Theatres were the joint property of Shakspeare and his Copartners.\*

\* This Partnership consisted of the following persons:—Laurence Fletcher, William Shakspeare, Richard Burbage, Augustine Phillippes, John Hemminge, Henry Condell, William Sly, Robert Armin, and Richard Cowley.

OF LAURENCE FLETCHER but little is known: he was buried at St. Saviour's, Southwark, 12th September, 1608.

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE was born 23 April, 1564; obiit 23 April, 1616. He was a player in 1591; about which time he began to produce his inimitable Dramas: he discontinued writing for the Stage in 1614, in which year he produced the comedy of "The Twelfth Night." He married, and had a family, early. It has been latterly contended that he received a regular classical education; but the proofs advanced do not carry conviction to every mind. The probability is, that he obtained the rudiments of learning at a common grammar school, and improved himself afterwards by reading and reflection. The stories of his stealing deer, and holding horses at the doors of the theatre, make a conspicuous figure in some relations concerning him: the first, as far as it can be relied upon, appears to have been the consequence of a drunken frolic; the latter, perhaps, is more than doubtful. He seems to have been a man of a cheerful temper, and a pleasant companion; to have lived independently, and died in easy circumstances.

RICHARD BURBAGE, son of James Burbage, (the most celebrated tragedian, as well as a fine comedian, of Shakspeare's time,) was born before 1550, in Holywell Street, parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch. He was the original Romeo, and he had one of his daughters christened Juliet. He appeared on the Stage when quite a child; and died, some say of the plague, March, 1618-19, and was buried in his own parish church. Camden calls him a "second Roscius."

AUGUSTINE PHILLIPPES, an author as well as actor; he is supposed

As yet, scenery was almost unknown; although properties (sometimes termed decorations) were used, as well

to have played low comedy. He was a respectable man, amassed considerable property, and died at Mortlake in Surrey, May 1605.

JOHN HEMMINGE, or HEMMINGES. He was a tragedian and a printer, in partnership with Condel; born about 1556; he is supposed to have played Falstaff. He was a Warwickshire man; a shire fertile in players and poets. In 1623 he published the first edition of Shakspeare's Plays; and continued Manager of the King's Company till his death, 10th October, 1630, aged 74 or 75. He probably died of the plague, which raged violently in that year.

HENRY CONDELL, or CUNDELL. His origin is unknown; he lived in Aldermanbury, and served the office of a *sidesman* 1606. He was a comedian, but not so good as Hemminge; he played before 1589, and was buried in St. Mary's, Aldermanbury, December 29, 1627. He left considerable property to his wife and children.

WILLIAM SLY. Less is known of him than of Condel; of course little can be said about him. He is reported to have played *Osrick* in Hamlet, and *Porrex* in Tarleton's "Seven Deadly Sins;" he was one of the Lord Chamberlain's Company. He died before 1612.

ROBERT ARMIN, comedian; sometimes played the clown. He wrote, among other things, "*A Nest of Ninnies, simple of themselves, without compound.*" Strange and uncouth titles appear to have been as much the fashion then as at present. The dates of his birth and death are unknown.

RICHARD COWLEY. Among the low class of actors, as *Verges* in "Much Ado About Nothing;" buried in St Leonard's, Shoreditch, March 13, 1618-19. Contemporary with the above was,

JOSEPH TAYLOR, a celebrated *Hamlet*, said to have been instructed by Shakspeare himself: he was a good comedian also.

There were in Shakspeare's time the following Theatres:—The *Theatre*, from its denomination supposed to be the first that was built, the site of it unknown. The *Globe*, Bankside; so called from its sign,—Hercules bearing the Globe. It was an hexagonal building, partly open, and partly thatched. *Blackfriars* Theatre, in Play-house Yard, Water Lane; one in *Whitefriars*, supposed to have stood in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street. The *Curtain*, (Curtine), Shoreditch. The *Red Bull*, in St. John Street,

as trap-doors.\* The mode of indicating locality in a scene was by introducing such properties as were consistent with

nearly opposite Hicks's Hall. The *Fortune*, Whitecross Street: the two latter were attended solely by the citizens and lower classes. The *Cockpit*, or *Phanix*, in Drury Lane, which stood nearly opposite the Castle Tavern; it had originally been a Cockpit, and was called the Phoenix, as is conjectured, from having that bird for its sign: others say that it took that name on being rebuilt after the old Cockpit had been burnt down, from the allusion to the phoenix being renewed from its own ashes. In addition to these were three of less note: the *Hope*, *Rose*, and *Swan*, which soon fell into disrepute; the former was converted into a bear-garden, and the two latter into gymnastic schools. Stow's Annals say, that at the Blackfriars, Salisbury Court, and Cockpit Theatres, they performed by candlelight,—in the others by daylight; and the *Historia-Histrionica* says, that Blackfriars and the Globe were the winter and summer Theatres of the same company, called the King and Queen's Servants.

\* *Properties* are articles used on the stage; such as small machinery, tables, chairs, and any thing necessary to the stage performance, from a car down to a corkscrew.

I subjoin, from Malone, a list of "Propertys" (properties) used in a Mystery founded upon Tobit and his Dog, exhibited in the Broadgate, Lincoln, 1563. (6 Eliz.)

1. "Hell Mouth, with a nether chap.—2. A Prison with a covering.—3. A Sarah's Chamber.—4. A great Idol.—5. A Tomb, with a covering.—6. The City of Jerusalem, with towers and pinnacles.—7. King's Palace at Nineveh.—8. Old Tobey's House.—9. King's Palace at Laches.—10. A Firmament, with a fiery cloud and a double cloud." By this it appears that they termed every piece of machinery, however large, a property; but properties, as the term is understood now, are furniture for the scenes, not the scenes themselves, or the fixed machinery; and the articles necessary for a performer, such as sceptres, swords, canes, letters, rings, &c. &c. &c. A car, however large, is a property: so is "a great idol," if embodied; but if it be flat, and only painted and fastened to the stage, it does not come under the care of the property-man, but the scene-man. Some of the above articles appear to convey an idea of scenes, or painted cloths; yet there is no



it. Thus, a table and chair conveyed the idea of a chamber; a walking staff, of a street; and a balcony, or raised platform, at the upper end of the stage (which was a fixture) served for battlements, or any other elevated position. Scenes, it is said, were first exhibited at Christ Church, Oxford, by Inigo Jones, in a piece performed in 1605, before James I.; who, in 1636, was again present at a representation of a performance at Hampton Court, in which the same artist exhibited another specimen of scenic decoration, which Anthony Wood terms "exquisite machinery;" but the term *appearance*, not *scene*, was used on the occasion: for instance, "first *appearance*, a Temple of the Sun," &c. There is presumptive, if not positive, proof, that when a Tragedy was performed the stage was hung with black. Female characters were performed by boys, or effeminate-looking young men: which circumstance may account for Shakspeare's females possessing, with a few exceptions, a subordinate degree of interest. Previously to the Restoration, women had appeared on the Stage occasionally; but, generally, not till after it; *Desdemona* is said to be the first character played by a woman. Mrs. Hughes and a Mrs. Colman are mentioned as playing, but not<sup>a</sup> regularly; and the latter spoke or sung in recitative. Mrs. Saunderson, who afterwards married Betterton (the *Romeo* to Mr. Kynaston's *Juliet*), is called the first English actress; because she<sup>e</sup> was the first female who made the Stage a regular profession.

During the Protectorate, the splenetic sanctimony of

mention in any author on the subject of the introduction of scenery till the 17th century. But that omission constitutes no positive proof of scenes never having been previously used; and there are various passages in Shakspeare which appear to favour the opposite notion.

the rigid Puritans, conjoined with Presbyterian bigotry, and other causes connected with the peculiar state of public affairs, occasioned the total suppression of theatrical performances:—the seal of silence was affixed to the portals of the Drama.

Charles II. came, and the bonds of Puritanism and the doors of the theatre were burst together. Superstition liberated, by a common resiliency, bounded to the opposite extreme; religion and hypocrisy were confounded, while legitimacy and licentiousness danced into the Theatre hand in hand; and if the reign of Elizabeth was the *Golden age* of the Drama, the term *Brazen* may be applied to that of Charles. Wit abounded, doubtlessly; but that which is flagitious is so much the more to be detested in proportion as it becomes the more capable of seducing and destroying.

In 1660, Sir William Davenant, the Poet Laureat, and Thomas Killigrew, Esq., one of the Grooms of the Chamber, obtained Licenses from Charles to erect two new Play-houses, and constitute two separate Companies, to the prohibition of all others in the cities of London and Westminster, or the suburbs. During the Interregnum, (1654,) Davenant had invented a new species of entertainment, of recitative and song, which was performed at Rutland House, with scenes; and in 1658 he exhibited a similar performance at the Cockpit, in Drury Lane; this attempt was copied from the Italian opera, and may be considered as introductory of that species of performance to the British Stage.

Killigrew constituted a Company, which played at the Red Bull and other Theatres, till a new one was built for them in Drury Lane; and Sir William Davenant agreed with Betterton and others to perform, under the authority

of his license, at the Salisbury Court and other places, till he could erect a new Theatre, "with prospective scenes," for their reception.

They performed at the Cockpit and Salisbury Court, till the Theatre in Portugal Row, Lincoln's-inn Fields, was ready; where they were sworn (by Lord Manchester, the Lord Chamberlain) the Duke of York's Servants. In 1671, they played in a new Theatre (designed by Davenant, who died in 1668) opened by Lady Davenant and Betterton, Charles Davenant officiating for his mother; and in 1682, they joined the King's Servants at Drury Lane. In 1690, Christopher Rich, who had been bred to the law, purchased of Davenant's family their patent; but he was afterwards expelled the Theatre, by Collier, formerly a barrister, who had obtained a license. There had been so many disagreements among the proprietors and actors of Drury Lane that, as they could not agree, the Theatre was closed by order of Queen Anne's Lord Chamberlain. This was about 1708: and Rich, after his expulsion, rebuilt the Theatre in Lincoln's-inn Fields, which was opened in 1714, under the management of John Rich, his son, of harlequinade celebrity: who produced, at that Theatre, the first pantomime exhibited in England, under the title of Harlequin Sorcerer; himself playing harlequin, a character for which he was famous, under the assumed name of *Lun*, a popular performer of the hero of the magic lath in Paris.\*

In 1730, on the site of the present Theatre, (the ground being taken of the Duke of Bedford, at a rent of 100l. per

\* Rich, as his patent had been suspended, had some difficulty in obtaining leave to open; but through the interest of Mr. Secretary Craggs, King William took off the suspension, and left the patent in full force. Christopher Rich died in 1709, and John Rich in 1761.



annum,) was built, and in 1733 opened, (by John Rich,) the first Theatre erected in Covent Garden; which held, before the curtain,\* about 200*l.*; the longitudinal diameter of the auditory part, from the commencement of the stage to the back wall of the boxes, being 54 or 55 feet. The above receipt was thought very considerable in 1750; but to augment it, the custom was to build numerous seats upon the stage, where a very large body of auditors was accommodated; but that mode so inconvenienced the actors, that Garrick, after he became Manager of Drury Lane, contrived, at some hazard, to abolish it.†

In 1746, Garrick (who made his *début* in London about 1741 or 1742, at the Theatre in Goodman's Fields, under Gifford, and appeared at Drury Lane under Fleetwood,) joined Rich at Covent Garden, and drew great houses; although Rich seemed jealous of his fame, fearing it might eclipse that of his darling pantomimes.

At the end of the season, Garrick joined Lacy in the patent for Drury Lane, undertook the management, and carried the majority of Mr. J. Rich's principal performers with him; in consequence of which, during January and February 1747, Rich could not perform, through a paucity of good actors, above three or four nights in a week; and was frequently obliged, even in February, to dismiss the audience without any performance. Rich, who died during

\* In Shakspeare's time 20*l.* was a good receipt. In 1747, says Cibber in his Apology, Mrs. Rich said she was always contented if the receipt reached three figures.

† Davies says that the profits of the season 1746-7 were 8,500*l.*, and in a few years after 11,000*l.*, drawn principally by Maddox, the *straw-balancer*! At any rate, the public taste was as indifferent then as it possibly can be at this time. Bad as our present management is said to be, they could not make *hay* out of *straw* now.

the run of a spectacle which he had produced in honour of the Coronation of George III. and Queen Charlotte, left the Theatre to *Beard*, the singer (who had married his daughter), *Wilford*, (the brother of Mrs. Rich, and father of Mrs. Bulkely,) and others; enjoining by his will, that the property should be sold for the benefit of his heirs, whenever a purchaser or purchasers could be found who would give for it 60,000*l.* At that time the ground-rent was 300*l.* per annum: at Rich's death, Beard, (who died in 1791,) became sole manager.

In February 1763, a riot took place on the first representation that season of *Artaxerxes*; upon the occasion of the public having been advertised that "nothing under full price would be taken." It was headed by a Mr. Fitzpatrick, who had attacked Drury Lane in the same manner the preceding night. Mr. Beard defended his refusal of taking half-price, from the custom on such occasions; and dilated upon the enormous expenses incurred by managers; particularly upon the splendid manner in which the pieces were got up at Covent Garden—but in vain: he was told that, as Garrick had submitted, it shewed an overweening confidence in him to resist: and the demand was, whether he would, or would not, comply with their regulation of the prices "yes, or no?"—Beard boldly answered "no." The benches chandeliers, &c., were immediately demolished: and as much injury done as took four or five days to repair. Beard obtained a Lord Chief Justice's warrant, and carried Fitzpatrick and one or two others before Lord Mansfield; who told Fitzpatrick, that if a life had been lost, he should have answered it with his own. No more attempts were, in consequence, made at demolishing the Theatre; but, firm to their purpose, night after night the party so annoyed the performers and disturbed the per-

formance, with cat-calls, &c., &c., that Beard was obliged to give up the contest.\*

In 1767, (for the sum of 60,000*l.*) Messrs. Colman,† Harris, Powel, and Rutherford, purchased the Theatre of Rich's heirs; each had a quarter-share, but the management was confided to Colman: in consequence, however, of disputes between the partners, which occasioned a paper-war, (many pamphlets on each side being published,) Rutherford, (who had taken part with Harris against Colman and Powel,) in 1768 sold his share to Messrs. Leake and Degge;‡ and, about seven years after, Colman sold his quarter to his copartners jointly, and the management devolved upon Mr. Harris; who eventually purchased Leake and Degge's shares, and became thereby the principal proprietor, — Powel alone retaining a share.

\* The Covent Garden Fund for Distressed Actors was established in the year 1765. The present Stock of this Fund, is 27,710*l.*, viz.: 10,000*l.* 3 per cent. reduced; 13,000*l.* old 4 per cents, which will shortly be reduced to 3½ per cent.; 3,850*l.* 3 per cent. consols; and 860*l.* otherwise at interest. At the anniversary festival at Freemasons' Tavern, in March 1824, about 1,300*l.* was collected by voluntary donations.

† George Colman, Esq. died in 1794. He was a dramatist and father of G. Colman, Esq. the dramatist, appointed licenser of the Drama in 1824. T. Harris, Esq. was father to H. Harris, Esq., now principal proprietor, and late manager of the Theatre: he is also sole proprietor of the Theatre Royal, Dublin.

Powel was an actor of celebrity. He died about 1769, and left his share to his widow, who married Dr. Fisher, many years leader of the band. At the death of the widow, it descended to Powel's two daughters, who married G. White and J. Martindale, Esqrs.; the former a clerk of the House of Commons, and the latter proprietor of the Subscription House in St. James's Street. Rutherford was a private gentleman.

‡ Leake was a bookseller in the Strand; Degge was a solicitor.



In 1762, the Theatre was partly rebuilt, from a design of Mr. Holland, the Architect; towards the expense of which proceeding the late Duke of Bedford lent the proprietors 15,000*l.*, granted them a new lease, and raised the ground-rent to 940*l.* per annum:—at present, 1824, it is above 2,000*l.* At the opening of the new Theatre, the price of admission to the boxes was raised from five shillings to six shillings.

About 1803, Mr. John Kemble purchased of Mr. Harris a sixth share of the whole property, for the sum, as reported, of 22,000*l.* He was soon constituted stage-manager, instead of Mr. Lewis, the celebrated comedian; who had filled that post for several years, with great credit to himself, and advantage to the concern.

In the night of September 20, 1808, the Theatre was burnt to the ground. The play of Pizarro had been performed, and it was conjectured that the calamity originated from the ignited wadding of the guns, used in the piece, lodging in some inflammable part of the decorations of the stage. The company, during the remainder of the season, performed at the Opera-House. The proprietors, embarrassed but not discouraged by so heavy a misfortune, used such energy and perseverance, that a new Theatre, (from a design by Mr. R. Smirke, Architect,) was erected and opened within a year.

On December 31, 1808, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales honoured the proprietors by laying the first stone of the new edifice: for which ceremony preparations were made worthy of so distinguished a mark of patronage. His Royal Highness, decorated with the splendid orders of the Grand Master of Masonry, was attended by his Royal brother, the Duke of Sussex, General Hulse, Colonels M'Mahon and Bloomfield, and a deputation from all the

masonic lodges in the metropolis. His Royal Highness was met, at the spot which is now the entrance in Bow Street, by the Earl of Moira, (Deputy Grand Master,) with Messrs. Harris and Kemble, and was conducted to a royal marquee, amid the acclamations of a vast crowd of spectators; the guard of honour lowered their colours, a royal salute of artillery was fired, and the bands of music in attendance struck up "God save the King." He then proceeded to lay the foundation-stone, (which was placed at the north-east angle of the building,) depositing in a cavity which had been formed in it, a brass box, containing a large bronze medal, having the portrait of his Royal Highness on one side, and on the reverse an appropriate inscription.

The box also contained a series of all the gold and silver coins of the reign of George III. Six freemasons spread the cement, which operation was completed by the Grand Master, with a silver gilt trowel:—the bands, while the stone was deposited in its bed, playing "Rule Britannia," the spectators cheering, and the artillery discharging a royal salute. His Royal Highness next tried the correctness of the work, with the plumb, level, and square, presented to him by Earl Moira: he then gave the stone three strokes with a mallet, and afterwards poured upon it corn, wine, and oil, from three silver goblets, the bands playing "God save the King:" then, expressing his wishes for the success of the undertaking, he retired, with the same formalities which attended him when he came.

Such was the indefatigable attention of the Architect, and the exertion of the Builder, that the new Theatre was opened on the 18th of September, 1809, with the tragedy of *Macbeth*.

The Proprietors, in order the more speedily to cover their loss, had appropriated a larger portion of the audi-

tory than had been customary, to the purpose of private boxes;\* and had increased the prices of admission to the boxes and pit; the former to seven shillings, the latter to four shillings. These circumstances, which were considered as an attempt at imposition, excited so strong a spirit of indignation in the public mind, that the consequence was a most distressing *Riot*; which, commencing on the first night, continued with unabated violence for about two months; during which time the proprietors were playing under the oppression of a very serious loss: for no female, nor any person but those who went either to enjoy the riot, or to riot themselves, would go to the Theatre. It was called the “O. P. Row,”† from those letters being the initials of the

\* These boxes were sumptuously fitted up, with elegant rooms behind them; and the popular notion was, that they were designed to favour secret assignations; and, during the disturbance subsequently described, no female could appear in any one of them without being subjected to the grossest insult from the pit and galleries.

† There was a strange mixture of whimsicality and distressing circumstance exhibited all through the riot. When the performers entered they were greeted with applause, to indicate that what would follow was not meant personally to them; but the instant they attempted to speak, “Off! off!” overpowering hisses, appalling hoots, and the “*O. P. dance*,” commenced, in which the whole audience joined. This dance was performed with a deliberate and ludicrous gravity, each person pronouncing the letters O. P. as loud as he could, and accompanying the pronunciation of each with a beat or blow on the floor or seat beneath him, with his feet, a stick, or a bludgeon; and, as the numerous performers kept in strict time and unison with each other, it was one of the most whimsically tantalizing banquets, or torments, that could be conceived. Numerous placards were exhibited in all parts of the Theatre; some of them very offensive, others ludicrous. The inscriptions were as various as they were numerous, and exhibited any thing rather than “Mercy” or “Consideration.” The public took great offence at Mr. James Brandon, house and box keeper,

words “Old Prices;” and after a severe struggle to “weather the storm,” the proprietors were obliged to compromise the matter with the public, by reducing the admissions, to boxes six shillings, and to the pit three shillings and sixpence, and engaging to take away a stipulated number of the private boxes.

Peace was restored,—but plenty came not with it; for the confidence of female timidity in security was too much shaken to render the boxes of Covent Garden sufficiently refulgent with beauty and fashion,—those magnets of attraction,—early enough in the season to enable the proprietors to make up their loss.

How far the offence of the proprietors should have provoked so severe a measure, it is now useless to inquire; but, considering the heavy calamity and loss they had previously sustained, the circumstance appears to present a strange instance of the want of reflection in a public, rarely deficient of generosity, in visiting so acrimoniously a mistaken and not unprecedented hope that indulgence would be granted to the managers, when the peculiar circumstances of their situation were contemplated. The punishment, by increasing their losses, seems to have been preponderatingly inadequate to their crime; and although the resistance of the proprietors, (which sprang from that innate principle of British independence that irresistibly impels the weakest to opposition, when his property is at stake,) might have irritated those whom it was their interest to soften; still allowance should have been made, and the

imputing to him the interference of hired boxers and public-officers, and demanded his dismissal, with which injunction the proprietors were obliged to comply; but when consideration returned, mercy was extended, and Brandon was allowed to resume his offices.



thunderbolt should not have been hurled at those who had already been scorched by the lightning. A general secession from the Theatre till the prices were lowered, had been a more speedy and decisive correction of managerial assumption, and more noble than organized aggression.\*

It is, perhaps, a remarkable circumstance, that from the period of "the O. P. Row," a London audience has been found more captious than they had previously been.

About 1810, Mr. Harris, in consequence of ill health, deputed his son Mr. H. Harris to the management; and the Theatre, under his direction, was comparatively prosperous. Still, the loss occasioned by the fire, the very heavy expense incurred by the prevailing taste for splendid spectacle, and the great increase of salaries, kept the concerns of the Theatre in an embarrassed state; in consequence of which, in 1812, a deed of settlement was entered into, by direction of the Lord Chancellor, for the mutual security of the proprietors and creditors; and Mr. John Brandon was appointed, in the deed, Treasurer.†

\* The loss occasioned to the proprietors by the fire was very serious, independently of that which sprang from the riot; since it is reported that the cost of rebuilding the Theatre was 150,000*l.*; of which, 44,500*l.* only, is said to have been recovered from the Insurance-offices. A great proportion of the money (*viz.*, 50,000*l.*) was raised by subscription, in shares of 500*l.* each; but this sum was to be repaid, and the annual interest, at 5 per cent., amounted to 2,500*l.*

† Mr. Brandon came into the Theatre with Mr. Leake, in 1768, and was always acknowledged by the proprietors to be a most active, zealous, and confidential servant; but in consequence of a misunderstanding with the directors of 1823, (with the particulars of which the public are well acquainted,) he was superseded by a gentleman named Robertson, on condition of receiving an annuity of 200*l.* from the concern; and was engaged by Mr. Elliston at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane.

In June, 1817, Mr. John Kemble, whose aim during his management was to maintain the dignity of the Stage, took his leave of the public, and went to reside at Lausanne in Switzerland. Mr. J. Fawcett, the comedian, succeeded him as director of the stage: it is but justice to say that he is an excellent actor; and the circumstance of his still (1824) retaining the post, is, perhaps, the best proof that can be given of his impartial and upright conduct.

In 1821, Mr. T. Harris died, and his property in the Theatre descended to his heirs. In 1822, Mr. Kemble returned to England, and assigned his share of the concern to his brother, Mr. C. Kemble, who ranks, deservedly, in the first class of his profession as an actor, and is at present manager of the Theatre. Mr. J. Kemble revisited Lausanne, and died there, early in 1823.

The firm of the Theatre now consisted of, Messrs. Harris, C. Kemble, Const, Forbes, and Willett;\* and the difficulties of the Theatre increasing, or disputes arising between the partners, I know not which, an arrangement was entered into in 1822, in which it was stipulated that Mr. H. Harris should, for ten years, resign the management to Mr. C. Kemble, for which he (Mr. H. H.) was to receive an annuity (it is reported) of 1,350*l.*; the other contracting parties were to pay an annual rental (it is also reported) of 12,000*l.* during the aforesaid term, for the use of the Theatre; which, with a certain portion of the profits, was to be applied to the liquidation of the debts of the Theatre,—with some other conditions, of which I am not likely to be in possession;

\* When Mr. Martindale died, he left his share to his widow, who at her death left a life interest in it to Francis Const, Esq., the present chairman of the Middlesex magistrates. The late Mr. White's daughters married, — Forbes, Esq., captain R. N.; and — Willett, Esq.; who, of course, represent the heirs of Mr. White.

nor am I certain that what I have here stated is *perfectly* correct.

In consequence, however, of this agreement, Mr. C. Kemble, by consent of the other gentlemen, entered into the management; but Mr. Const, who had not been consulted in the arrangement, filed a bill in Chancery, the issue of which was, the Chancellor's appointing a receiver, Mr. Robertson, who succeeded Mr. Brandon:—thus has the Lord Chancellor, after having been successively the *Manager in Equity* of most of the Theatres in London, added to his *dramatic* duties the guardianship of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden.

DESCRIPTION OF THE THEATRE:—The Temple of Minerva, in the Acropolis at Athens, suggested the design for the portico of this edifice,—the order of which is pure Grecian Doric. The principal front, in Bow Street, measures 220 feet from one extremity to the other; the Hart-Street front and its parallel (which is approached by piazzas from Bow Street and Covent Garden), are in extent 178 feet, or nearly so. The Bow-Street front presents a magnificent portico, with four columns of the Doric order, very large, fluted, and without bases; supporting a pediment, and elevated upon a flight of steps. The whole front is enclosed by iron rail-work; and the upper part is decorated by basso-relievo representations of the Drama, ancient and modern, which are sculptured in long pannels, separated by the portico. On that side nearest to Hart Street, in the centre of the sculpture, sit three Greek Poets; namely, Æschylus, the father of Tragedy, his face towards the Hart-Street corner; and Aristophanes and Menander, the fathers of antient and modern Comedy: the two latter face the portico; and Thalia, with the crook and mask, is inviting them to imitate her sprightly ex-

ample. Polyhymnia and Euterpe, with the greater and lesser lyres; Clio, with the longer pipe; and Terpsichore, indicative of action, or mime, following her. Three nymphs, crowned with fir pine, succeed, attending Pegasus. Minerva is placed opposite to Æschylus, who appears attending to her dictates: and between them, leaning on his fawn, is Bacchus; typical of tragedy having been invented in honour of “the wine-giver.” Behind Minerva is Melpomene, with a sword and mask: two Furies succeed, pursuing Orestes; the latter imploring the aid of Apollo, who appears in his chariot. In the centre, on the other side of the portico, sits our *immortal Bard*; the emblems of dramatic poetry lying around him. He is summoning, with his right hand, Caliban, laden with wood; Ferdinand, sheathing his sword; and Miranda, with Prospero, whom she is entreating: Ariel is above, sounding enticing airs on his pipe: their backs are towards Shakspeare. This side of the group is filled up by Hecate, in her car, drawn by oxen (at the extreme); Lady Macbeth, with the daggers; and Macbeth, turning with horror from the dead body of Duncan. The space from Shakspeare to the portico is occupied as follows:—Milton, seated, is contemplating Urania, who surmounts, but faces him; and Samson Agonistes is chained at his feet. Behind them are the two Brothers, driving Comus and three bacchanals before them, the enchanted Sister being seated: the sculpture is terminated by two tigers, emblematical of the brutal transformation of the devotees of sensuality. The figures of Tragedy and Comedy, in niches, occupy, the former the south, and the latter the north, extremity of the building. Comedy has a crook on her right shoulder, the mask in her left hand; and Tragedy exhibits the mask and a dagger.

The grand entrance to the boxes is under the portico



in Bow Street ; and laterally with it, towards Hart Street, is the entrance appropriated to the private boxes.

The grand entrance opens to the vestibule, where, at the right extremity, a large stove is placed ; and two boxes for money-takers, and another where free admissions of all kinds are registered, present themselves, immediately upon passing through the folding-doors from the portico. Near each money-taker's box is a Grecian lamp, elevated upon a column of porphyry. The grand staircase is to the left, central in the hall ; divided, longitudinally, by two rows of large Ionic columns, in porphyry, with a superb Grecian lamp suspended between each. This staircase leads to the ante-room, which is ornamented by pilasters of porphyry ; and contains a large statue of Shakspeare, executed by Rossi, in yellow marble. To the right, from hence, are the folding-doors that lead to the Auditory ; and to the principal Saloon, which is supported by pilasters in porphyry, and contains several plaster statues upon pedestals. The extremity to the right leads to a confectionary, where refreshments are supplied to the company ; and there is a place provided for the same purpose at the opposite extremity. On the entrance side of the saloon is a large staircase leading to it, right and left, from the first circle of the boxes. This room is superbly lighted, and provided with crimson seats. There is, also, another saloon in a higher story, which was originally appropriated to the private boxes. It is supported by four massive columns of porphyry, with a recess at each end, in which are stoves ; and over the mantle-pieces are semicircular looking-glasses :—refreshments are provided here also. The sides of this saloon are occupied by crimson seats, and statues of heathen deities on pedestals, alternately placed. There is another entrance to the boxes from Covent Garden, which is handsome, but not so elegant

as that from Bow Street: it has two flights of stairs. The entrances to the pit and galleries are from Covent Garden, and on that side of the Theatre which angles (in Bow Street) with the grand front.

The Hart-Street front contains the entrance to the Stage, (or stage door,) which opens to a large and convenient porter's hall. On the right is an ante, or waiting-room. To the left is the door leading, on the right, to the cellar, (or all that part of a Theatre under the stage, from whence traps, and rising machinery, &c. are worked;) and on the left to a stone staircase, with iron balustrades, leading up to the stage, and the rooms appropriated to the principals of the different departments in the Theatre; as well as to the painting-room. At the extremity of this part of the front, and laterally, is the royal entrance; which is a square, called Prince's Place; three sides of which are formed by the walls of different parts of the premises, and the front by lofty iron rails and gates, through which the royal carriage proceeds to the entrance door on the left, whenever His Majesty honours the Theatre with his presence. Adjoining to the gates, and terminating the Hart-Street front, is a handsome building containing the box-office, the house-keeper's residence, and other private apartments connected with the Theatre.

*The Auditory.*—The form of the Auditory is that of the horse-shoe; the width, at the extremities, is 51 feet 2 inches; and the depth, from the front lights to the front of the boxes, 52 feet 9 inches. There are three tiers of boxes, each containing twenty-six, including those in the proscenium; and there are seven boxes on each side above them, and parallel with the lower gallery. The number of private boxes are twenty-six, situated as follows:—three on each side in the proscenium; one on each side

even with the orchestra; five on each side of the first circle, and four on each side of the second circle; amounting to thirteen on each side. Over the boxes in the proscenium, on each side, is a semicircular appearance of a box, with a crimson enclosure. To the principal private boxes are attached private rooms, with fire-places. The width of the lower gallery is 55 feet, the depth forty. The width of the upper gallery is 55 feet, the depth twenty-five.

The appearance of the house is very imposing: the colour is a subdued yellow, relieved by white, and superbly enriched with gilding. Around the dress circle are wreaths enclosing the Rose of England, in burnished gold; the first circle displays the Thistle of Scotland, and the second circle the Shamrock of Ireland: and these three emblems are alternately placed, with fancy devices, in rich borderings, &c., in every part of the Auditory; which, from the reflection of the lights, gratifies the prevalent taste for splendour with one blaze of refulgence. The back and sides of the pit are decorated by the representation of dark crimson drapery, as are the interiors of all the boxes; which produces a very effective contrast to the brilliancy of the front. The boxes are supported by small iron columns, fluted, and gilt. The ceiling, over what is called the slip boxes, exhibits pannels of blue, relieved by white, and enriched with gold. The middle part of the ceiling is circular; in the centre of which, from a richly gilded glory, surrounding a circle of golden lyres, &c. is suspended a chandelier of glass, of the most superb description; illumined by two circles of gas-lights: the remainder of the ceiling is a light blue sky, relieved by delicate white clouding. The cove of the proscenium, in the segment of a circle, contains the moiety of a rich gilded glory, and sky to match the ceiling, surrounded by a bordering of gold; in which, as well as round the ceiling, either fancy flowers

are introduced, or representations of those national emblems, the Rose, &c. The proscenium is supported by four pilasters, painted to imitate Sienna marble. Stage doors are wholly dispensed with. The top of the proscenium, from whence the curtain descends, is an arch of about thirty-eight feet wide and three feet deep; surmounting a superb drapery border of crimson, white, and gold, elegantly disposed upon a transverse bar of gold, terminated on each side with a lion's head: in the centre of this drapery is the King's Arms. For the green curtain is substituted a drop, representing a luxuriant profusion of drapery; crimson, white, and gold, (to match the borders,) drawn up by cords and tassels; and disclosing part of the interior of a palace, supported by numerous Ionic columns; which has a most imposing appearance. There are also pilasters, imitative of Sienna marble, which slide backward and forward, in order to widen or contract the stage.

	FT.	IN.
The width of the proscenium in front is.....	42	6
Width at pilasters .....	38	8
Height to the centre of the arch.....	36	9
Ditto, at spring of arch.....	33	3
Depth of stage, from the front lights to the sliding pilasters .....	12	3

The number of superbly brilliant cut-glass chandeliers, which are hung round the Auditory, is fourteen; with three gas lights in each. In the two extreme dress boxes are large looking-glasses.

The King's box is always fitted up on the left of the audience, in the dress circle, and occupies the extent of three or four of the boxes.



The public, or open boxes, will contain about	1,200	people.
The pit .....	750	—
Second gallery .....	500	—
First gallery .....	350	—
	<hr/>	
	2,800	—

exclusive of standing-room, &c. The private boxes are let, some by the year, some nightly.

*The Stage* is large and commodious. On the right of the Auditory, or left of the stage, are the passages which lead to the superior and inferior green-rooms; the former of which is handsomely fitted up: at one end is a stove, and opposed to it a large looking-glass for the performers to adjust their dresses by, previously to going on the stage. The seats for the performers are covered with crimson, and the windows are decorated with crimson curtains; the room is handsomely carpetted, and there is a large chimney-glass over the stove, with a portrait of the late T. Harris, Esq., so many years proprietor of the Theatre. Performers receiving under a certain salary are not allowed to enter this room but on particular occasions. The inferior green-room is up a flight of stairs, and is neatly fitted up; and here is a piano-forte for the singers to try their songs, and for the choristers to learn their music. Beyond the best green-room is the manager's room, and the passage leads on to the coffee-room, property-room, and others appropriated to the business of the Theatre. The scene-rooms, carpenter's shop, &c., are in this part of the building. The stage is principally lighted by gas.

		FT. IN.
The stage measures from the front lights to the	}	
back wall.....		68 0
Width from wall to wall .....		82 6

	FT.	IN.
The height of the flats (or flat scenes), which stand } transversely on the stage .....	21	0
Width of ditto (14 feet each half) .....	28	0
Heights of wings, or side scenes .....	21	0
Width, about .....	4	0

*The Flies*, or that part of the Theatre surmounting the stage, are in size correspondent with the rest of the Theatre, and consist of two stories. These are filled with the machinery used in lowering the curtain, drops, wheels, borders, clouds, &c. &c.; and adjoining them is the painting-room, which is furnished with sky-lights, and measures in length seventy-two feet, and in width thirty-two feet.

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Of the Persons employed in an Establishment of this magnitude it is almost impossible to give an account; the number is so arbitrary, and depends so much upon circumstances. The principal, regularly engaged, (exclusive of the performers,) are as follows:—

STAGE.—The stage-manager, pantomime-director, chorus and ballet masters, prompter, his deputy, copyist, (he has several assistants,) property-man, and call-boy.

ORCHESTRA:—Director of the musical department, leader of the band, six or eight 1st violins, ditto 2d, two tenors, two violincellos, three or four double basses, oboe and flagolet, 1st and 2d flutes, 1st and 2d clarionets. 1st and 2d horns, 1st and 2d bassoons, trombone, trumpet and bugle, piano-forte, bells, carillons or small bells, (the three latter not always used,) and kettle-drums, (other instruments are occasionally introduced); music copyist, (he has several assistants,) and an attendant upon the orchestra to lay out the music.

PAINTING-ROOM.—Four principal painters constantly employed, exclusive of accessory principals, subordinates, colour grinders, and attendants.

DECORATIVE MACHINERY, &c.—The property maker, machinist, master carpenter, six or eight carpenters, and from twenty-four to thirty scenemen. The property maker and master carpenter, generally, are the joint machinist.

WARDROBE.—Master tailor and keeper of the gentlemen's wardrobe, &c., mistress of the ladies' wardrobe:—both these have numerous constant and occasional assistants.—Dressers, many of both sexes. Each principal performer has a separate dresser.

When new pieces of magnitude are preparing, the extra assistants engaged in the three latter departments are very numerous.

In the HOUSE department.—Treasurer, under ditto, housekeeper, his assistant, about ten money-takers, as many check-takers, (from four to six at the offices for admission,) box-keeper, (his attendants are numerous,) lamp-lighters, firemen, porters, and watchmen.

There are, also, many people employed in other capacities, which, if mentioned, would scarcely be understood, without more detail than can be introduced here.

On particular occasions, such as during the performances of grand spectacles, &c., there are many supernumerary performers engaged by the night; the aggregate salaries of whom frequently amount to 50*l.* or 60*l.* per week.

## REFERENCES TO THE PLATES.

The accompanying Engravings will exemplify and render familiar the preceding descriptive letter-press. By the architect and builder these Sections and Plans will be instantly understood, as pointing out readily and clearly the relative situations, forms, and arrangement of the different parts of this complex and extensive edifice. They also indicate the proportions and position of the walls, timbers, and open spaces; and thereby shew how the whole is combined. Few buildings demand so much skill and science in construction as theatres; before the curtain they require an ample open space for the auditory; great strength in timbers and iron, for joists, beams, cantalivers, &c., with apparent lightness and elegance in aspect. The floorings must be solid and level, the ceiling strong, with the least possible weight of material; whilst the complicated nature of the stage, flies, and various connected rooms, puts in requisition all the art of the architect and skill of the carpenter. An examination of the annexed Prints will verify these remarks, and may induce the reader who has never had an opportunity of examining the whole interior of a theatre, to analyse its component parts, and study its anatomy. When we consider the extent of the edifice now under notice,—its complexity of parts,—its strength and solidity,—with its numerous subdivisions,—we cannot but feel some degree of astonishment and admiration at the skill and labour that jointly co-operated to complete the whole in one year.

PLATE I.—Plan of the Theatre, shewing the forms and situations of the following apartments, &c.:—A., Hall, or Vestibule of approach to the Boxes, after passing under the portico A.\* B., Grand Stairs of ascent, with four columns on each side; a View of which Staircase is given in Plate V. C., Ante-room to Corridors, D. D. D. At the angles of these



are Flights of Stairs, E. E., to the upper tier of Boxes. F., Staircase to Boxes, from the Piazza side of the house. G., The King's Staircase. H., The Royal Saloon. J., The King's Box. K., Store-room. L. L. L. L., Ladies' Dressing-Rooms. M., Committee-room. N., Scene room. O. O. O., Actors' Dressing-rooms. P., Manager's room. Q. Q., Green-rooms.

PLATE II.—*Transverse Section of the Theatre, from C. to D. in the Ground Plan.*—a. a. a., Various subterraneous Stables and Rooms; some of which are arched with brick, and others are covered with boarded floors. b., Portico in Bow Street. c., Hall, or Vestibule, marked A. in the Plan. d., Committee-room. e., Gentleman's Wardrobe. f., Dressing-room. g., Orchestra. h., Private Box. k., King's Box, and Ante-room to the same. m., Entrances to Private Boxes. n., Passage. o., Ladies' Wardrobe. p., Carpenters' Workshop, in the Roof. q. r. and s., Private Boxes.

PLATE III.—*Longitudinal Section, a. to b. on the Plan.* a. b., Scene-rooms. c., Painting-room. d., Stage. e., Mezzanine Floor. f., Cellars beneath the Stage. g., Orchestra, with open arched space beneath, at h., intended to increase the sound of the band. j. j. j., Stables, &c., under the Pit. k., Vaulted Passages. l., Room under the Vestibule, m., to Pit. n., Corridor round the Pit. o., Box Lobby. p., Lower Saloon to Boxes. q., Upper Saloon to ditto. r., Lobby to Gallery. s. s., Carpenters' Workshop. t., Flies.

PLATE IV.—A., Elevation of the principal Front in Bow Street, with its portico, &c. B., Section through Saloon, or Ante-room, to Boxes; Staircase to the same, and Entrance Hall, Committee-room, &c. C., Transverse Section through the Staircase.

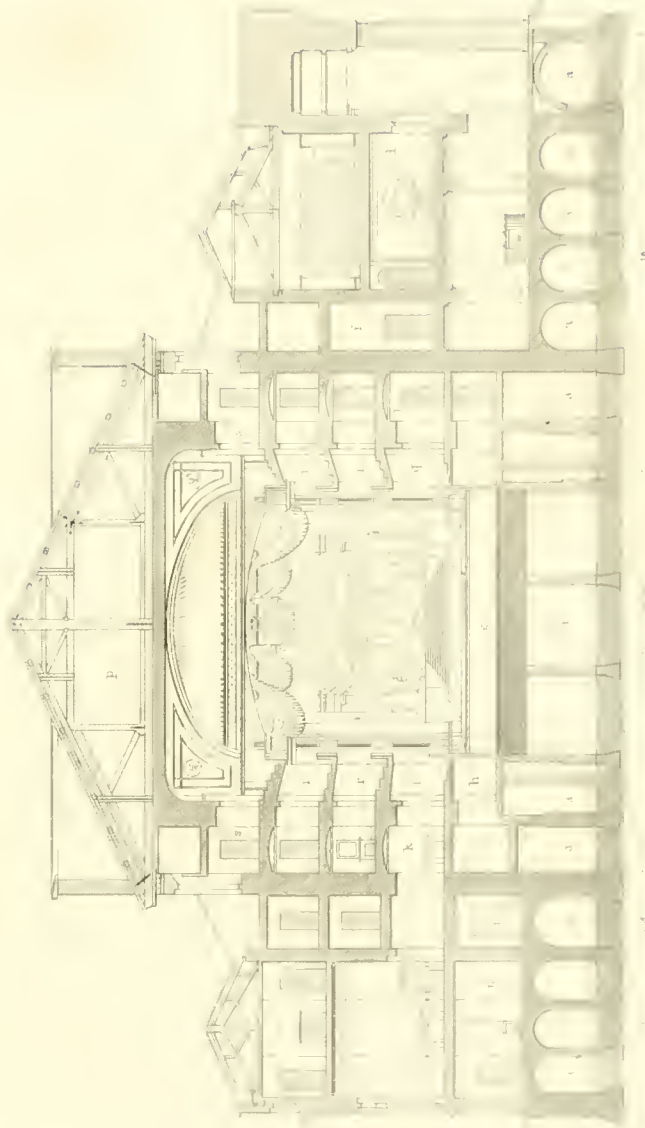
PLATE V.—Principal Staircase to the Boxes.

PLATE VI.—Interior of the Theatre from the Stage.

END OF ACCOUNT OF THE THEATRE.





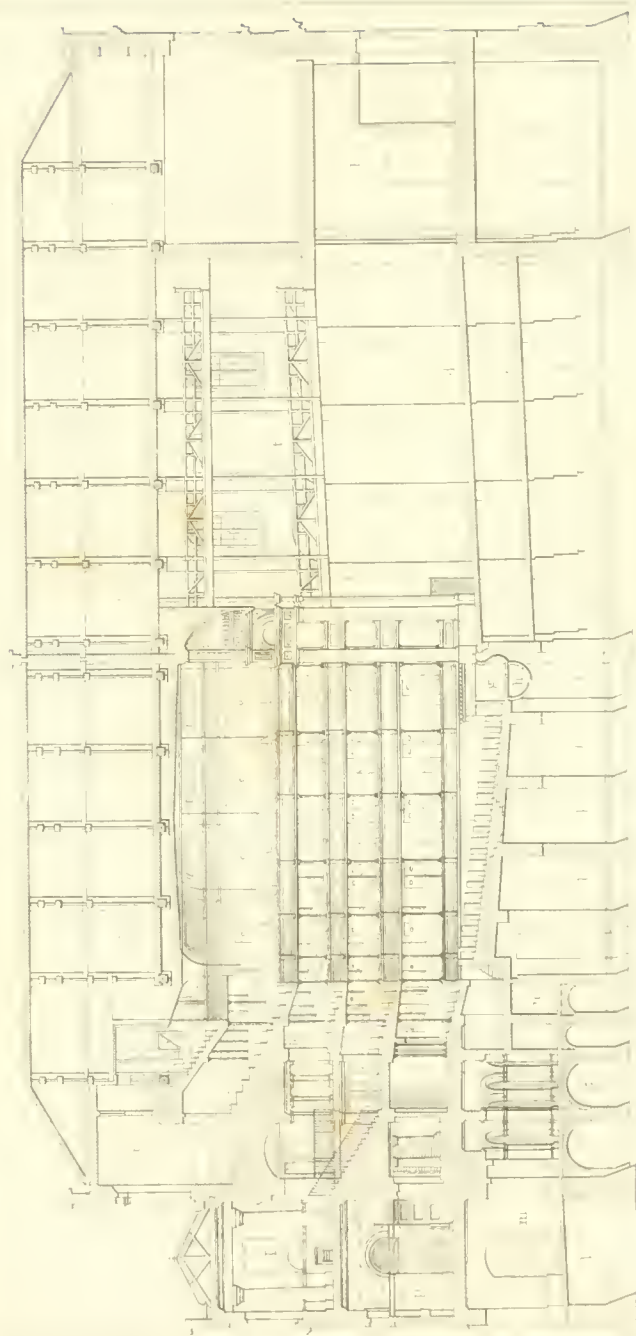


SECTION OF THE TEMPLE  
SHOWING THE INTERIOR  
AND THE ALTAR





PLAN OF THE THEATRE

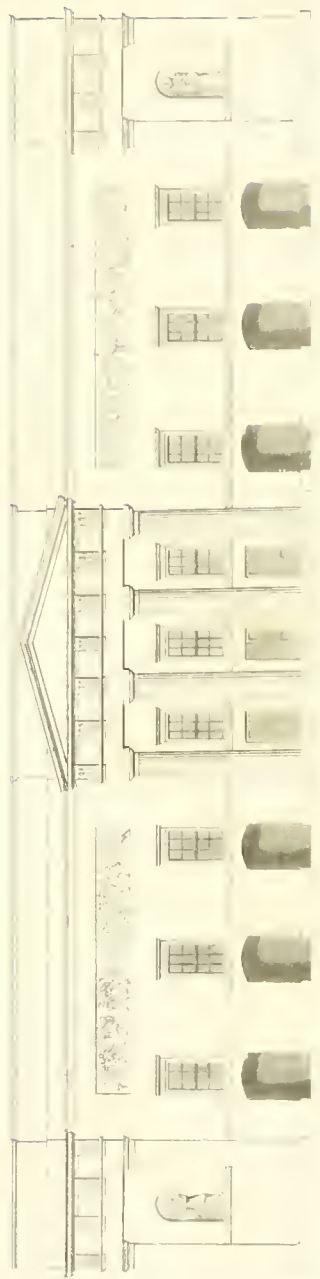


THEATRE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
DESIGNED BY J. C. SMITH  
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FIGURE 1. - PLAN OF THE LIBRARY

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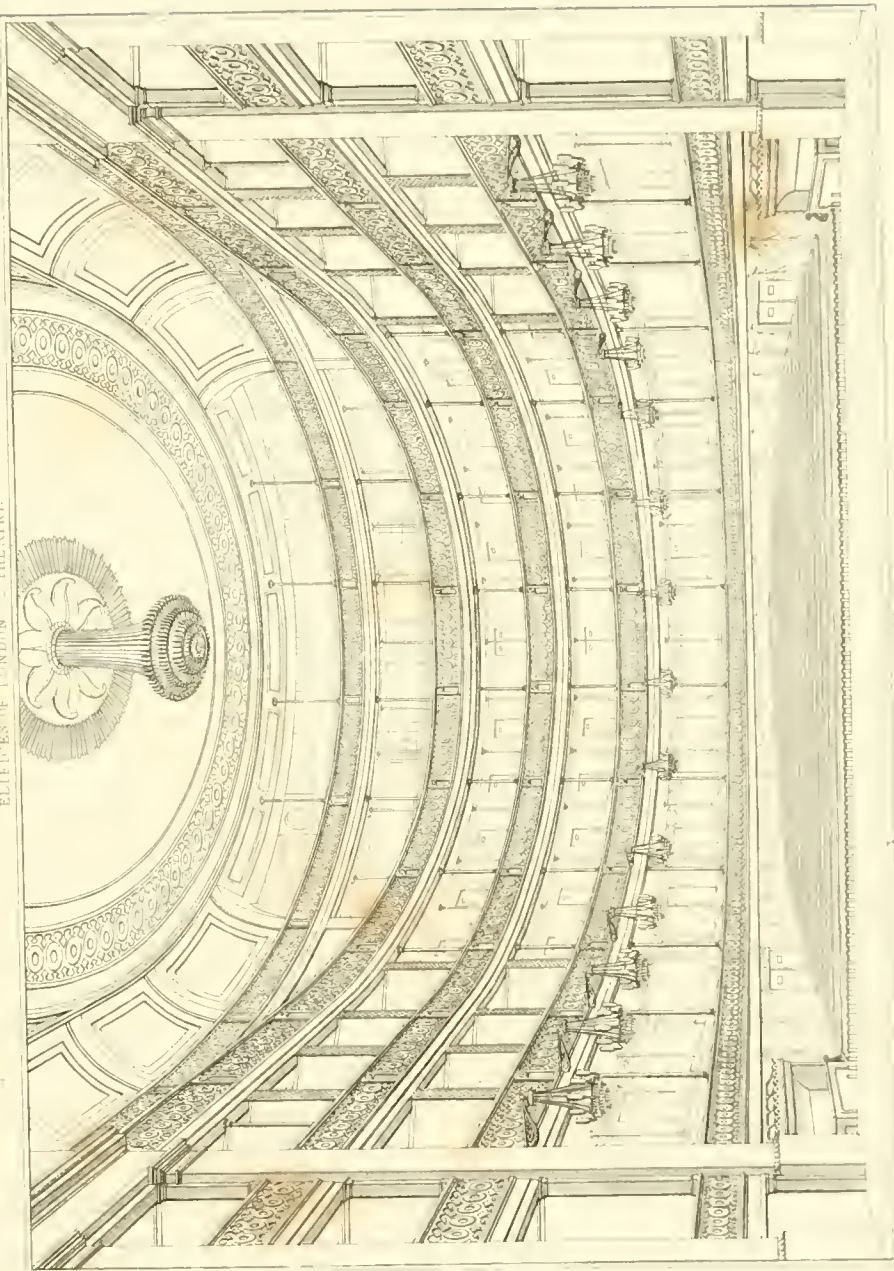








ELIENS OF LONDON - THEATRE







AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
THEATRE ROYAL DRURY LANE,  
BY C. DIBDIN;  
WITH  
A DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT THEATRE,  
BY E. W. BRAYLEY, F.S.A.

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WHEN the Restoration dispelled the clouds of puritanical gloom, and liberated "harmless pleasure" from the "dark prison-house" of superstition, Rhodes, a bookseller, obtained (about 1659 or 1660) a license for a company of players, who performed at the COCKPIT, or PHŒNIX, in Drury Lane: at their head were Rhodes's two apprentices, Betterton and Kynaston; the latter of whom was "the Siddons" of the day,—till nature, superseding art, affectation, and formality, made way for beauty, grace, and softness; and WOMAN asserted her claim to admiration as well on the Stage as in every other station of society. Notwithstanding this introduction, Kynaston's *feminine* celebrity was such, that it was customary with ladies of rank and fashion to take him, after the play, in his female habit and decorations, in their carriages during their visitings and airings; and he continued to divide the applause of the audience with his fair competitors, in despite of the dis-

advantages under which he laboured from comparison. But although one "fair impostor" was endured, the deception could be carried no further; for female grace, rising like a Genius of light in a scene of gloom, diffused a splendour of fascination over the Stage; which the enthusiastic hailed with exultation, the fastidious regarded with suspicion, and the superstitious contemplated with horror: the first anticipating the most rational results for the dignity of the Stage; the second foreseeing its complete demoralisation; and the last predicting national calamity as the consequence: for Prynne, at the expense of his own ears, had so influenced those of others, that an actress, by those of the Oliverian leaven, was looked upon as a Circe; and many have imputed the flagitiousness of the Stage to the introduction of women.\*

\* I know not why refinement shall be decried as the organ of demoralisation; but prejudice is ever prompt, in favour of its theories, to confound conjectures with certainties, principles with passions, and misconceptions with inclinations. It can see but little itself, and imagines all equally blind; it can feel but little, and concludes, therefore, that all are equally insensible. That the introduction of Women has added grace to the Stage, and refined the character of the drama, the exaltation of *many* of them to coronets and other honourable distinctions will prove; and establish a very significant answer to their mistaken, and, in some cases, pitiful defamers. Connected with theatres for years, acquainted with most distinctions of society, and no careless observer of human nature, I can bear witness to as much comparative virtue among the histrionic corps as I have been able to discover among the other classes of mankind; with, frequently, more generosity and less meanness than I have observed among many who enjoy more of the world's "golden opinions:" and, if they have their faults, among their *illiberal* accusers, who shall "cast the first stone?" and who, among their more thinking adversaries, shall say, "I am not as other men are?" I should not have ventured upon this subject, but that the Reverend and popular Mr. Irving has lately been preaching against the Stage; and as it is the

The Cockpit was built in 1617; and on the 4th of March, in the same year, was demolished by the mob; of the exact cause for which I am not in possession. Its site was opposite to the Castle Tavern, Drury Lane; it was rebuilt, and performed in, in 1629. During the sway of puritanism in Charles II.'s time, this theatre (anno 1640) was suppressed; but in 1658, it was re-opened, and assumed a more regular dramatic form than before. Rhodes, as before-mentioned, obtained a license to set up a company; and the theatre was in his possession in 1660, in which year Charles II. granted patents to Sir William Davenant and Killigrew; the latter of whom built a new theatre upon nearly the site of the present edifice, in Drury Lane, which was opened in 1663; the company being called "the King's Servants," as Davenant's were "the Duke's Servants." In 1672, the new house was burnt down: it was rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren, according to some authorities, and opened in 1674. In 1684, "the Duke's Servants" joined "the King's Servants," and they both played together in Drury Lane Theatre; of which Christopher Rich, who was bred to the law, became a proprietor, he having purchased Sir William Davenant's patent of his heirs.\* In 1709, Rich

fashion to run after him, of course, hundreds have heard him; but although I once heard him preach an excellent *Charity* Sermon, I think he cannot reconcile *all* his sermons to the character of Charity as defined by St. Paul.

\* Cibber says, that a Sir Thomas Skipwith had a share in the patent; which, through indignation at Rich's ill conduct, he gave to a Colonel Brett, who then busied himself in the theatre; which becoming more profitable than before, Sir Thomas served the Colonel with a subpoena from Chancery, declaring that he only gave him his share in trust. Brett, in disgust, gave up the share; and at the death of Sir Thomas it devolved to his son: Brett, to whom it had been legally assigned by Sir Thomas, resigning it to the son.

and the actors quarrelled ; and the consequence was, that on the 7th of June, in the same year, the theatre was “ silenced ” by the Lord Chancellor.

In 1710, Mr. Collier (a barrister), who had left the Bar for the Stage, obtained a theatrical license for a term of years, and a lease of Drury Lane from the landlords. During the time that the house was closed by the suspension of the patent, having recourse to that British battering-ram, a mob, he had broken into the theatre (22d November, 1709), and expelled the patentee. Wilks, Cibber, and Dogget, afterwards became managers of the theatre ; their names having been included in a new license with Collier, to whom they agreed to pay a sinecure of 700*l.* a year ; and in December 1712, Booth having created a splendid reputation by playing Cato, (of which character he was the original,) contrived, in conjunction with Wilks and Cibber, but against the inclination of Dogget, to procure the insertion of his own name in the license ;\* when Dogget, in ill temper, and after applying to the Vice-Chamberlain, accepted 600*l.* for his share. The license having nearly expired, Wilks, Cibber, and Booth, invited Sir Richard Steele to join them upon the same terms that connected Collier with them ; on condition that, by his interest at court, he procured them a new license in his own and their names, leaving Collier out, and excluding him altogether : this was effected, and Collier went to law for compensation.

In 1718 the firm consisted of Steele, Wilks, Cibber,

\* This was principally effected by a very curious letter written by Booth to Coke, the Vice-Chamberlain, (a copy of which is in the possession of J. Winston, Esq.) in which Booth details many circumstances of his own life, and particularly dwells on the ruin that would befall him should his name not be inserted in the license.

and Booth, — Steele having obtained a patent (19th of June, 1st of George I.) for his own life and three years after it; this patent was revoked in 1720, in consequence of an offensive publication of Steele's. The license then remained with Wilks, Cibber, and Booth: the latter of whom sold a moiety of his share to Mr. John Highmore, for about 2,500*l*. Booth dying in 1733, the other moiety was purchased of his widow, by Giffard, formerly proprietor of the theatre in Lincoln's-inn Fields. After the death of Wilks, in 1731 or 1732, one Ellis acted as the representative of his widow. Cibber, dissatisfied with the introduction of new characters, retired; authorising his son, Theophilus Cibber, to represent him; but his conduct offending the other partners, Highmore, to avoid the unpleasantness, purchased Cibber's share for three thousand pounds, or guineas, in 1733. Young Cibber having excited the actors to revolt, and decoyed the best of them to the Haymarket, Highmore's management became much embarrassed; and he instituted proceedings at law against the performers, who retaliated on a pretext relating to the patent. In vexation Highmore sold his property in the concern (1736) to Charles Fleetwood, Esq.; who also bought the rest of the property from Wilks's widow and Giffard.

Fleetwood united the Drury Lane and Haymarket companies; and through the attraction of Quin, Macklin, Clive, Pritchard, and afterwards Garrick, (who left Giffard to join Fleetwood,) the theatre was for some time in a state of prosperity, and distinguished by an audience as elegant as they were numerous. But it afterwards fell into disrepute, in consequence of the introduction of tumblers, rope-dancers, monsters, and mummery, brought from Sadler's Wells. Fleetwood was also perpetually at variance with his actors; executions or bailiffs were continually in the theatre, and its internal state



was that of complete confusion. He then farmed the property to one Pierson, the treasurer, when the principal actors, with Garrick at their head, entered into a confederacy to obtain a license for themselves from the Duke of Grafton (then Lord Chamberlain), in which, however, they failed. When Fleetwood was preparing to re-open the theatre for the ensuing season (1743), he was much distressed for performers; Garrick, Macklin, Havard, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Clive, and others, having entered into an association, and made a formal agreement not to accede to any terms offered them by the patentee, without the consent of all the subscribers. But interest, that "breaker of leagues and covenants," after some time spent in altercation, occasioned a treaty to be concluded between the manager and the junto; excepting Macklin, who would not agree but upon conditions which he could not obtain.\*

In 1744, Fleetwood, being tired of living continually harassed without any countervailing effect, advertised the patent for sale: the purchasers were Messrs. Green and Amber, bankers, for 3,200*l.*; who sold to Mr. J. Lacey a third share of the whole, upon condition of his managing the theatre. Garrick now left Drury Lane, in spite of Lacey's determination to make him conclude the engagement he had entered into with Fleetwood, and went to Dublin, though but

\* Fleetwood expressed his determination that Macklin should never again enter the theatre during his management. This occasioned a long, recriminatory, and vituperative paper war between Garrick and Macklin: the particulars of which are to be found in Davies's *Life of Garrick*. An opposit'on on the part of Macklin was attempted by his friends, and Fleetwood prepared for it by hiring a corps from Hockley-in-the-Hole, the "*fancy*" Palaestra of the day. The civil storm lasted two nights, when the perseverance of Fleetwood, and the public avidity to see Garrick, put a period to it.

for a very short period : on his return he engaged at Covent Garden with Rich : Quin, Mrs. Cibber, and Mrs. Pritchard, joining him : — Barry, Macklin, Mrs. Woffington, and Mrs. Clive, being at Drury Lane. Garrick, however, being tempted by Lacey with the offer of a moiety of his patent, (which the Duke of Grafton had promised to renew,) and for which he gave 8,000*l.*, returned to Drury Lane in 1747. Garrick and Lacey divided the management between them ; they having come into possession of the whole property, through the bankruptcy of Green and Amber. Lacey superintended the scenes, wardrobe, and economy of the household ; while Garrick directed the stage, and introduced a more efficient mode of conducting the business than had hitherto been observed ; and on September 20, 1747, (having altered the mode of lighting to that which was practised previously to the introduction of gas,) he opened the house with a Prologue, written by his friend Dr. Johnson.

Garrick, to his honour, laboured to restore to the Stage its native dignity, (which had been compromised by Fleetwood,) and commenced with the revival of the plays of Shakspeare. Among the first was *Romeo and Juliet*, which had lain dormant 80 years : Barry and Mrs. Cibber were the hero and the heroine. But those performers, deserting Garrick, through the querulous temper of Barry, performed the same characters at Covent Garden, and Garrick opposed them with the same play ; himself acting *Romeo*, and Miss Bellamy, *Juliet* : while, in opposition to Rich's *Mimes*, he brought out *Queen Mab*, in which the inimitable Woodward played *Harlequin*. This procedure enabled him wholly to defeat his competitors.

The month of October 1754, was remarkable for a dreadful *Riot* at Drury Lane Theatre, occasioned by a

Spectacle brought out under the direction of Noverre, called the *Chinese Festival*. It was dressed and decorated in the most splendid manner, and introduced, in the words of Davies, “ innumerable shapes and characters ;” and the most skilful dancers in Europe were engaged, at very heavy salaries, to appear in it. But, hostilities having commenced between England and France, the public looked with a jealous eye upon the introduction of so many foreigners on the English Stage at such a crisis, and threatened the manager with their vengeance, upon its exhibition ; and notwithstanding that the King (George II.) honoured the first night with a “ command,” the presence of royalty itself could not repress the indignation of the public : the tempest burst on the appearance of foreigners ; and the King, upon being told the reason of it, laughed very heartily. For five nights successively the riots continued (for it had cost so much, that Garrick, contrary to the advice of Lacey, was bent upon carrying his point, if possible) ; the boxes were inclined to allow its continuance, but the pit and galleries, resolute in their opposition to “ all papists and Frenchmen,” would neither hear reason themselves nor suffer others to hear it ; and becoming more incensed from being opposed by the people of fashion, resolved to stand by each other and “ fight it out ;” which they did, not only pugnaciously, and by the *argumentum baculinum*, but swords were drawn, blood shed, and eventually the whole theatre, chandeliers, and scenes, left in such a demolished state, that it required several days to repair them : Garrick’s windows were shattered, and himself, hitherto the idol of the people, publicly execrated ; so uncertain is the tenure of that so coveted delusion, Popularity !

At the coronation of George III. and Queen Charlotte,

both Garrick and Rich produced appropriate Spectacles; but that at Drury Lane was very inferior to that at the other house. Rich, whose whole mind was engrossed by spectacle and splendour, and whose judgment of stage effect, scenic and decorative embellishments, was equal to his avidity for exhibiting them, produced a pageant of the most brilliant and costly nature; to the production of which he had devoted himself: he lived to see his hope realised, and died during the consummation of his wishes. Garrick next strove to remove a nuisance which had existed from the origin of playhouses,—the intermixture of the actors and the audience behind the scenes and upon the stage; which, independently of its destroying dramatic effect, led sometimes to very unpleasant results to the performers.\*

But to effect this desired object required much address: for upon the numbers collected behind, as well as before the curtain, the *actors* relied for making profitable benefits; and would, therefore, feel themselves injured by it: and it was not likely that the public would be deprived of a privilege they had so long enjoyed, without resistance; and as Garrick had acquired more than one fearful lesson of experience from the violence of an enraged audience, he could not be suspected of being disposed to subject himself to a third. The only eligible plan, therefore, appeared to be, such an augmentation of the theatre as would accommodate an audience sufficiently numerous to satisfy the

\* “One evening in *Lear*,” says Davies, “when the old King was recovering from his delirium, and sleeping with his head on Cordelia’s lap, a gentleman at that instant stepped from behind the scenes upon the stage, and threw his arms round Mrs. Woffington, who acted that character: nor did I hear that the audience resented, as they ought, so gross an affront offered to them and to common decency; so long had they been accustomed to riotous and illiberal behaviour in the theatre.”

players, and justify the proprietors in shutting the *stage* door against the public. The theatre, in consequence, was considerably enlarged, and opened in 1762 with the desired effect, as the nuisance was completely removed.

It had been the custom to raise the prices on the first night of a new play, and sometimes upon that of the first night of the revival of an old one, when altered from the original; and this custom was observed on the revival of Shakspeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, altered by Victor, in 1763; and also on the sixth night, which was the author's own benefit. No objection had, in such a case, been ever before made by the public; but upon this occasion, a Mr. Fitzpatrick, of whom mention is made in the account of Covent Garden Theatre, and whom Churchill severely satirised in his *Rosciad*, harangued the audience from the boxes, in "very intemperate and opprobrious language," upon the imposition of the managers. Garrick went forward to exculpate himself from the charge, but in vain; the demolishing system practised at the Chinese Festival was renewed; and Garrick, to appease the tumult, thought it prudent to submit.\* But the storm had only slackened, not subsided; for on the ensuing night, Mr. Fitzpatrick again officiated as public orator; to demand "admittance for the public at half-price, after the third act of the play, excepting in the first run of a new pantomime." This point, from fear and necessity, was conceded; but the spokesman required that some of the performers who had espoused the cause of the managers should make the *amende honorable*; particularly Moody, whose offence was, preventing a man's setting fire

\* Garrick informed the audience that the nightly expenses, which in 1702 were 34*l.*, had risen (1763) to above 90*l.*; at present, in 1824, they are about two hundred guineas!



to the theatre. Moody, however, refused to apologise; and Garrick could not appease the wrath of the audience till he had promised that Moody should not be employed till they had restored him to favour, which was soon after accomplished.\*

Garrick, soon after this, went to the Continent; for owing to some injudicious measures with regard to the stage, which he pursued contrary to the advice of his friends, the receipts of the theatre decreased so much, that his vanity was greatly hurt.† He left his brother George as his substitute in his absence; but in April 1765, he returned to England, and resumed the management. The public flocked to greet him: the King commanded his first appearance; and such was the fervour of his welcome, that if his self-love had been grieved at his departure, his ambition must have been more than gratified at his return.

\* Davies says, “When Moody went forward, being a favourite, he thought to avert their anger by comicality; and with the Irish brogue he said, ‘he was very sorry he had displeased them by putting out the fire.’ This augmented, instead of decreasing their rage, and they insisted that he should ask pardon on his knees. Moody indignantly, and with an oath, rejected the degradation, and walked off the stage. Garrick was so pleased with his firmness, that he received him with open arms, and told him that while he (Garrick) was master of a guinea, he should have his income; but that if he had been mean enough to submit, he would never have forgiven him. Moody sought satisfaction from Fitzpatrick, who, either from fear or conviction of his improper conduct, wrote a concession to Mr. Garrick, and informed him, that on the first night Mr. Moody appeared he would attend with his friends, support him, and contribute to his being re-instated in the favour of the public; which was effected.”

† He had rejected the offer of Miss Brent's services, as well as those of some others; and while Beard, availing himself of their assistance, filled his house every night, Garrick and Mrs. Cibber actually performed one night to the sum of 3*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.*

In 1768 was brought out the *Padlock*, the music of which was composed by the late Mr. C. Dibdin; of whom to say that his countrymen have decreed him a public memorial,\* is to signalise his fame more forcibly than the warmest eulogium on his genius and originality could effect.

In 1769 was produced, in honour of Shakspeare, "*The Jubilee*," which had been represented at Stratford-upon-Avon; the music composed by Messrs. Arne and Dibdin. In 1773 died Mr. John Lacey, who left his share of the theatre to his son, Mr. Willoughby Lacey. The whole management of the theatre now devolved upon Garrick, who began to be afflicted with chronical disorders, which prevented him being so active as formerly; but, with a mind ever alive to the true interests of his profession, he, in 1776, effected the establishment of the Drury Lane Theatrical Fund, paid all the expenses incurred by obtaining parliamentary sanction to it, and contributed himself (as well as his partner, Mr. W. Lacey,) considerably to the Fund. Garrick also gave, for the purposes of the Fund, a house situated in Drury Lane: and it is recorded by Davies, that by acting for its benefit, and by donations, he gained for this establishment a capital of nearly 4,500*l.*†

Previously to the opening of the theatre in 1776, he made several alterations, external and internal, and took into it some part of the Rose Tavern, adjoining. Tired of management, however, and crowned with honours, he retired from the stage; assigning his property in the theatre to Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Thomas Linley, and Richard

\* At a public dinner at the Freemasons' Tavern, March 5, 1824, a subscription was commenced to erect a monument to his memory.

† At the Anniversary of this Fund, in 1824, its finances were augmented by the payment of a donation of 500*l.* by a Miss Read.

Ford, Esqrs., for 35,000*l.*; and soon afterwards those gentlemen purchased also the other moiety of Mr. W. Lacey. Garrick now took a formal leave of the stage, “ amidst the tears and acclamations of a most crowded and brilliant audience;” and died within three years after, on the 20th of January, 1779, aged 63 all but one month, being born on February the 28th, 1716. He was buried in the Abbey Church at Westminster, near the monument of his beloved Shakspeare; his remains having been attended to the grave by some of the first characters in the kingdom for rank, genius, science, and respectability. That he was a man of the most eminent talent is unquestionable; and that he exerted himself most sedulously to refine and dignify the Stage, is beyond dispute. “ Nor was any man,” says his biographer, “ better formed to adorn society, or more seriously disposed and qualified to serve mankind, than David Garrick.”

When the new firm, in the following season, opened the theatre, Sheridan's father superintended the stage for two or three seasons; but upon his relinquishment of it, Mr. Younger, who had been for several years prompter at Covent Garden, undertook the arduous task. In the year 1779, a coalition was entered into between the two royal theatres; in consequence of which the principal performers of each house acted occasionally for the benefit of the other.\* This interchange of actors was very beneficial to

\* To mention a few instances:—Mr. J. Bannister, who was engaged at Drury Lane, played Achmet at Covent Garden, on the night of the day on which Mr. Garrick was buried. Vernon, then at Drury Lane, also played in the *Duenna*, at Covent Garden, on another night; while Mr. Smith, (usually called Gentleman Smith,) of Covent Garden, played at Drury Lane: and Mr. Bannister took his benefit that season at Covent Garden. The

both theatres in casting the plays; because, when either theatre had not principals sufficient to cast a play as strongly as was requisite, the defect was remedied by borrowing an actor or two of eminence from the other; and thus the plays were, generally, more effectively performed than at any former period. But, as the friendship of rivals seldom continues long, the coalition was of short continuance; its existence terminating with the season.

In 1782 Mr. King became acting-manager, and continued to direct the stage till 1788, when he was succeeded by Mr. J. P. Kemble, who made his first appearance in London,

play was *Henry IV.*, in which Mr. Henderson played Falstaff, and Bannister, Prince of Wales.

Mr. Smith made his first appearance in 1753, and retired from the Stage in 1788.

Mr. Henderson appeared first (at the Haymarket) as Shylock, June 11, 1777, from whence he soon removed to Covent Garden: he died at the age of 40, November 25, 1785, in consequence of taking a wrong medicine, administered by the nurse in mistake; and was buried in Westminster Abbey Church.

Mr. J. Bannister made his first appearance in 1778, when 19, at the Haymarket Theatre, as Dick, in the *Apprentice*, for the benefit of his father, the late Mr. C. Bannister; and in the following year was engaged at Drury Lane, and made his first appearance as Zaphne, in *Mahomet*; in which character, as well as those of Dick, and Dorilas (in *Merope*), Mr. Garrick instructed him. He was very thin at that time, and, after he had succeeded in those characters, Garrick one day asked him what character he wished to play next. Bannister mentioned *Oroonoko*: "Oroonoko?—hey—hey!" said Garrick; "Oroonoko is a very good part, but your figure, hey!—your figure!—why—why—when your face is blacked, you'll look like a chimney-sweeper in a consumption!" Mr. Bannister took his farewell of the public, January 1, 1815, his benefit night. The performances were "the *World*, and the *Children of the Wood*;" in which he played Echo, and Walter.

at this theatre (as Hamlet), in 1784; his sister, Mrs. Siddons, who had played here for a short period in 1776, having commenced her permanent appearance in 1782.

In 1791 the theatre was pulled down to be rebuilt: the company performed at the Opera House the following season, and at the Haymarket Theatre the succeeding one, 1792-3. On the 12th of March 1794 the new theatre was opened,\* with an Oratorio; and on the ensuing Easter Monday (April 21st), with *Macbeth* and the *Virgin Unmasked*. In 1795, John Grubb, Esq., an eminent solicitor, purchased a share in the theatre,† and, Mr. Kemble having resigned the acting management, Mr. Grubb undertook it, but it was soon resumed by the former.‡ A short time

\* The dimensions of the new theatre were, — Length, from east to west, 320 feet; breadth, from north to south, 155 feet; width of roof, 118 feet. The roof was surmounted by a colossal statue of Apollo.

The boxes held 1828 persons; the pit 800; first gallery 675; second gallery 308: total 3611, sitting. Receipt, when completely filled, 771*l.* 6*s.*, at the respective prices of 6*s.* 3*s.* 2*s.* and 1*s.* for each person.

There were eight private boxes on each side of the pit, and six on each side of the stage; two tiers of complete boxes, and half-tiers parallel with the gallery.

† Joseph Richardson, Esq., who was a barrister and Member of Parliament for Newport, in Cornwall, purchased a share also; I believe one-eighth. He was the author of one dramatic piece, "*The Fugitive*," and acted at this theatre with success, in 1792. He was born in Northumberland, about 1756, and died at Bagshot, of a sudden illness, in 1803. He left his property to his widow, who now (1824) keeps a respectable female seminary in Red Lion Square, London.

‡ In 1800, a singular circumstance occurred at this theatre. A lunatic named Hatfield, from the pit, fired a pistol at his late Majesty; whose conduct throughout the whole transaction exhibited a firmness, and a confidence in his people, worthy his royal character and the loyalty of their



previous to the season of 1801, Mr. Kemble, with several other principal performers, intimated an intention of seceding from the theatre; as, the concern being in a state so nearly approaching to complete insolvency, the salaries were unprecedentedly in arrear; and the proprietors found it necessary to appeal to the Lord Chancellor for protection. At a hearing of the case in the Chancery Court, Mr. Sheridan pleaded the cause of the proprietors in person, and accused Mr. Holland, the architect, with having considerably exceeded the sum specified in the contract for rebuilding the theatre, and yet leaving the house in a very unfinished state; which charge was sustained by the oaths of Mr. Sheridan, and of Mr. Peake, the treasurer to the concern. The Lord Chancellor having recommended, for the benefit of all the parties,—proprietors, performers, and creditors,—that the theatre should be kept open; and ordered that the salaries of all persons employed should be paid prior to any disbursements being made, the Company cheerfully conformed to his decree; and Mr. Kemble resumed the stage-management, which, however, he finally relinquished at the end of the season. Mr. John Bannister succeeded him; but, after the experience of one season (1802-3), he threw up the directorship, owing to the perplexed state of the general economy of the theatre, and the exhausting efforts which the united laborious duties of manager and performer occasioned him.

At the time of the Lord Chancellor's interference, a Board of Management had been formed for conducting the concerns of the theatre, agreeably to the plan which he had recommended: it consisted of Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grubb, Mr. Gra-

nature; while the audience testified an unqualified indignation at the act, and an enthusiastic solicitude for the safety of their monarch, which must have been as gratifying to him as it was creditable to them.

ham, the police magistrate, and others; and, on the relinquishment by Mr. Bannister, Mr. Wroughton (who had been stage-manager for a short time previously) was induced to undertake the directorship of the stage.

On the evening of February the 24th 1809 the theatre was burnt to the ground, not more than five months from the time of the destruction of that in Covent Garden. The circumstance of the two Royal Theatres being burnt down within so short a period occasioned public conjecture that the fires were the effect of design rather than accident; but nothing has yet transpired to establish such a presumption, and I believe the positive cause was never ascertained.\*

The House of Commons was sitting at the time of the conflagration, and, when the news reached the Members, Lord Temple and Mr. Elliot proposed an immediate adjournment, which Mr. Sheridan, with much fortitude and feeling, requested might not take place; observing (in substance) that public business ought not to be interrupted through the concerns of an individual; notwithstanding which the Members separated, and many of them directed their steps to the scene of devastation, from motives as benevolent as their decision was prompt.

The consternation of the proprietors, renters, and all concerned in the interests of the Theatre, was such, that they

\* It is singular that there were placed in the upper part of the Theatre two immense reservoirs, sufficient to inundate the house; yet, whether it were owing to the suddenness of the conflagration, and no one being in attendance to set the water free, or whether they had been neglected and were empty, the purpose for which they were constructed failed; and a large iron curtain which divided the auditory from the stage (meant in case fire broke out in either part of the building to prevent the consuming element communicating with the other part,) had been removed a few months previous to the fire, it being so rusted that it was impossible to work it.

appeared unable to make any effort to surmount the calamity; for the embarrassed state of the establishment seemed to bid defiance to the hope of raising money for the purpose of replacing the Theatre on the appalling ruins, which were contemplated with despondency by the patentee, and with commiseration by the public.\* At length the late Mr. Whitbread, with a spirit that did honour to humanity, roused them from their apathy, undertook to arrange their affairs, and projected the plan of a new Theatre. For this purpose a Bill was carried into Parliament and passed, (in the session of 1810,) "For enabling the Proprietors of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane to form a Joint Stock Company, for the purpose of rebuilding the Theatre by Subscription," and the proposals were no sooner made public than the shares were all disposed of.†

Mr. B. Wyatt was the architect: the first stone was laid on the 29th October, 1811, and the new theatre opened on the 10th October, 1812. It was, partly, built upon the plan of the great theatre at Bourdeaux, supposed to be the best theatre in Europe for the accurate conveyance of musical sounds.

It was opened under the superintendence of S. Whitbread, Esq., M.P.,‡ who deputed as the manager S. Arnold, Esq. (the present proprietor of the English Opera-house), and

\* The total loss, including that of the performers, musicians, &c., with that of the proprietors, was estimated at about 300,000*l*.

† These shares were in two classes, viz., 500*l*. and 100*l*.; and an annual interest was to be paid upon them, in the manner usual with all incorporated and chartered companies; the amount depending upon the profits to be divided: at the end of the first season they produced 6*l*. per cent.

‡ With this gentleman were joined in the direction, the Hon. T. Brande, M.P.; the Hon. C. Bradshaw, M.P.; the Hon. D. Kinnaird; P. Moore, Esq., M.P.; H. C. Combe, Esq., M.P.; W. Adam, Esq., M.P.; R. Sharpe, Esq., M.P.; R. Wilson, Esq.; the Right Hon. Lord Holland.

the late Mr. Raymond as stage-manager. Mr. T. Dibdin undertook the situation of prompter, and assisted in superintending the operations of the stage. This regime continued for three years, to the end of the season 1814-15, when, Mr. Whitbread dying, the General Committee of Subscribers selected a Sub-Committee to manage the interests of the whole. The noblemen and gentlemen elected were the Earl of Essex, Lord Byron, Hon. D. Kinnaid, Hon. G. Lamb, and P. Moore, Esq., M.P.; who appointed Messrs. T. Dibdin and the late Mr. Rae as acting and stage-managers. At the termination of two seasons, (1815-16, 1816-17,) Mr. T. Dibdin became lessee of the Surrey Theatre, and upon his abdicating his situation, Mr. Raymond again became stage-manager; on whose death, which occurred a short time afterwards, Mr. H. Johnson and Mr. Rae were appointed managers. Mr. Stephen Kemble next succeeded; about which time, in consequence of the ill success of the theatre, and the hope of attracting the public by the moderation of the charge when compared with that of the rival theatre, the admission-money to the boxes was lowered :\* nevertheless, Covent Garden was more popular and attractive, and the General Committee determined to call the Subscribers together, when a proposition was made to let the theatre to the best bidder; which was unanimously agreed to.†

Captain Bennet, M.P.; L. Holland, Esq.; Sir R. Barclay, Bart.; G. Templar, Esq.; T. Hope, Esq.; J. Dent, Esq., M.P.; the Right Hon. J. Macmahon, M.P.; R. Ironmonger, Esq.; C. P. Crawford, Esq.; and G. W. Leeds, Esq.

\* But this experiment, producing no profitable effect, was, after a short trial, abandoned, and the customary prices were resumed.

† It may not be irrelevant to remark, that the evidence of all practical experience has proved that the management of a Committee is prejudicial to a Theatre, from the frequent want of unanimity, which paralyses that spirit

The Subscribers having come to the resolution of letting the Theatre, advertisements were issued for tenders to be delivered in for a lease of 14 years, containing the nature of the securities to be given by the bidder for the fulfilment of his contract. The two highest tenders were, one from R. W. Elliston, Esq., who offered 10,200*l.* per annum, exclusive of an agreement to pay the salaries of the secretary to the committee, and of other persons employed by them, and another from Mr. T. Dibdin, (backed by a wealthy and most respectable individual,) offering 10,100*l.* per annum, in the gross. Mr. Elliston, consequently, was preferred, and he opened the theatre in September 1818, with Mr. Winston (one of the present proprietors of the Theatre Royal Haymarket,) as his acting-manager, and Mr. Russel as stage-manager. At this time the proscenium of the theatre underwent a considerable alteration: when, among other improvements, stage-doors were introduced, there having been none in the original building; large tripods, with lustres, occupying the place appropriated to those almost universally adopted charac-

of promptitude, and celerity of action, so essentially requisite for the operations of the drama; especially as one great object of theatrical policy is, or should be, to watch every variation of that fickle dictator to the Stage, Public Taste, and to catch with avidity at every subject of popular contemplation. Hence, the execution of every plan ought to follow the conception of it with fervid rapidity, and this seldom or never can be the case where more than one commands. If a Committee be not unanimous for the adoption of any particular plan, although a majority decide upon its admission, there are many ways by which the minority (who, of course, think themselves right,) can retard its progress, and, even among those who agree upon the fitness of the proposed plan, there are often differences of opinion as to the best mode of effecting its operation, and the work, in consequence, for want of cordiality, is obstructed. Committees, in short, deliberate when they should act, while an unrestricted Manager makes deliberation and action proceed together.



teristics of a theatre. Previously to the season of 1822-3, the interior of the theatre was completely new-modelled, and a new auditory substituted for the old one; executed by Mr. Peto, from the designs of Mr. S. Beazley, the architect, who superintended the whole. Mr. Elliston is said to have expended in this alteration 21,000*l.*, and in consequence of frequent complaints that the nobility and gentry were incommoded by rain, when going from their carriages into the theatre and returning, Mr. E. has also built a portico at the grand entrance in Brydges' Street. Mr. Thomas Dibdin succeeded Mr. Russell as director of the stage; the whole business is now conducted by Mr. Elliston and Mr. Winston. Among the preparations for the season 1824-5, a re-decoration of the auditory was included, and various alterations were made for public convenience.

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#### DESCRIPTION OF THE THEATRE.

The general form of this edifice is that of a parallelogram; its extent from north to south being 131 feet, and from east to west 237 feet, independently of the scene-rooms, &c. extending 93 feet further eastward. The walls are almost wholly built of brick, but they are stuccoed on the principal front, in Brydges' Street. The chief entrance is approached by a flight of steps under a portico, which has been recently erected, and which has a flat roof, surmounted by a statue of Shakspeare. In the central part of the edifice, in the second story, are three large windows, having angular pediments; and at each extremity are two lofty antæ on elevated basements, supporting entablatures, the members of which are continued along the whole front. Below each entablature is a large window, and a semicircular-headed recess, or pannel. Four large tripod lamps, on high pedestals, orna-

ment the steps ; two of them being near the ends of the building, and the others in front of the intercolumniations of the three doorways to the entrance-hall.

The north front, in Russell Street, exhibits a uniform range of spacious doorways, seven in number, on the ground floor, together with eight intervening windows, in pairs ; all of which have semicircular heads. Over them is a tier of thirteen rectangular windows ; and on the same line, in each projecting extremity of the building, is a semicircular niche.

The easternmost entrance communicates with the stage ; the others in succession, with the king's box, the private boxes, the lower gallery, and the pit. The south side, in Vinegar Yard, or Woburn Court, corresponds in its general elevation with the north front ; but a new green-room, stabling, &c., have been recently attached to it. In this front are entrances to the pit, to the lower and upper galleries, and to the private boxes ; but the latter entrance is seldom used. A series of antæ, with a continued cornice, surrounds the roof of the stage and auditory. The eastern extremity is masked by the houses in Drury Lane, as likewise is a part of the south side by those in Vinegar Yard : some improvements in the latter place have recently been made (Oct. 1824,) by the erection of a circular brick wall and iron railing, inclosing the ground belonging to the Theatre.

The Entrance Hall communicates, eastward, with the rotunda and staircases to the boxes, and, on the north and south, with the pit-lobbies ; and from the latter, by winding passages, with the pit itself. The free-list officers and money-takers, who are fenced in by iron railing, have stations in the hall ; each end of which is crossed by an entablature supported by two fluted columns, of the Doric order.

The Rotunda and grand Staircase form very beautiful portions of the theatre : the effect is peculiarly striking ; and

the entire architectural arrangement is one of the most skilful and ingenious of modern times. The *Rotunda*, which is thirty feet in diameter, consists of two stories, separated by a circular gallery, and crowned by an elegant dome, from which is suspended a large brass chandelier, of a classic design, lit with gas. In the lower story, fronting the entrance, is a massive stove, surmounted by a cast from Scheemaker's Statue of *Shakspeare*, the plinth being inscribed, in golden letters, with the fine characteristic line from Ben Jonson, — "*He was not for an age, but for all time.*" Four semicircular niches break the concave of the walls, and on the right and left are doors leading to the principal staircases, which are each flanked by four Ionic columns of dark-coloured porphyry. All the steps and landing-places are of stone, and the ascents are guarded by iron railing, of a fancy pattern, in blue and gold, with hand-rails of mahogany.

The check-takers are stationed on the first landing-places, whence short ascents, of five steps each, lead to the entrances into the lobby of the dress circle of boxes. The second flights communicate with the stone gallery and with the upper story of the rotunda; the latter consists, principally, of a peristyle of eight columns, of the Corinthian order, of Sienna marble, supporting a highly enriched entablature and dome. Both the columns and the entablature are designed on the model of the grand remains of the Temple of Jupiter Stator, in the Campo Vaccino, at Rome. In each alternate intercolumniation is a semicircular niche, containing an allegorical female statue; these represent Tragedy, Comedy, Music, and Dancing. The other intercolumniations, which are open, communicate with the saloon, the lobby of the first circle of boxes, and the staircases leading to the second circle. The soffite of the dome is ornamented with five circles of deeply sunk panelling, crowned by a sky-

light. The circular opening, or well, in the centre, from which the area beneath is overlooked, is guarded by an iron railing, in blue and gold, capped by a mahogany hand-rail. The stone floor is partly sustained by cantalivers of cast iron; some of which are pinned into the wall, and others tailed down to cross cradles of the same metal.\*

Great skill and science are displayed in the construction of the landing-places connected with the rotunda, which receive and sustain the entire pressure from the upper flights of steps. They are supported by strong iron cradling, which consists of bars, earriage-pieces, trusses, binders, chains, tie-bolts, bolts, cramps, &c., and is additionally strengthened by abutments of Portland stone, and cross walls extending from the staircases to the external walls of the building; a distance of ten feet. The flooring of the stone gallery itself is constructed with joggle joints, so disposed, that the stones of the landings "press equally and directly upon the stones of the circular gallery in the rotunda, which constitutes a perfect arch to sustain the whole weight discharged horizontally across the landings from the upper flights."†

The *Saloon* has a very imposing effect, both from its architectural character and from the richness of its decorations. It is a well-proportioned room, forming a parallelogram of 87 feet 6 inches in length, by 27 feet 6 inches in breadth; but the extremities have been adapted into semicircles, each of which is fitted up with a handsome stove, having a niche over it: the height from the floor to the

\* The Section through the Rotunda, &c., marked B, in PLATE V., exemplifies the details of the above description; and the Longitudinal Section, PLATE IV., shews the connexion of the Rotunda with the Entrance Hall, Saloon, and tiers of Boxes.

† Vide Wyatt's "Observations on the Design for the Theatre Royal Drury Lane."

middle of the segment that forms the cove of the ceiling, is 31 feet. The ceiling springs on each side from a continued entablature, supported by eight duplicated pilasters, of the Corinthian order: these are painted in imitation of a choice piece of marble, in the possession of his Majesty, at Carlton Palace. From the lower members of the entablature, a profusion of blue and gold drapery (painted) is, apparently, suspended. On the west side are three large panels, with looking-glasses, in white and gold frames, extending from the floor to the drapery, protected by brass guards; and the spaces between the pilasters, &c. are also filled by looking-glass. The decorations on the opposite side are accordant, but in place of the looking-glasses there are three folding-doors, which communicate with the rotunda and landings of the grand staircase. Near each end the saloon is crossed by an entablature, supported by two Corinthian columns, painted like the pilasters, but having gilt bases. The light is diffused by three handsome cut-glass lustres, illumined with gas; and two others are suspended from the domes of the refreshment-rooms, which adjoin the extremities of the saloon. These rooms are ornamented with statues of females (bearing lamps), looking-glasses, &c., and on each side are two fancy pilasters, sustaining an entablature, with surmounting archoids, from the level of the crown of which the domes take their rise: the walls are coloured of a light red. The saloon is furnished with large ottomans, covered with crimson cloth.

Over each flight of steps which leads to the upper circle of boxes, a brass chandelier, illumined by gas, is suspended from the centre of a square-hipped sky-light: the ceilings of the staircases are diversified by panelling.

The *Auditory* of this theatre is extremely impressive, and there is a chasteness mingled with its splendour which satisfies the judgment, whilst its richness pleases the sight. The



general tone of the colouring is a light warm drab, profusely decorated with ornaments in gold, and in some parts blended with a light red colour. In its original state, as constructed by Mr. Wyatt, the auditory included three-fourths of a circle, the diameter of which, across the pit to the line of the breast-work of the dress boxes, was 58 feet; and the extreme distance, from the front of the stage to the back-wall of the boxes facing it, was 53 feet 9 inches. The present form, as designed by Mr. Beazley, is nearly that of the horse-shoe; the extremities converging from a semicircle, of 51 feet 6 inches in the chord, into an elliptical curve, which decreases, from the above width, to 46 feet 6 inches at its termination near the stage: from the front of the latter to the dress boxes, the extreme distance is 48 feet.\*

The fronts of the dress boxes are tastefully embellished by a series of representations, in long rectangular compartments, or panels, from the most popular of Shakspeare's dramas; and in the two extreme boxes are large looking-glasses. The upper circles, or tiers, including both the slips and the lower gallery, are each supported in front by fourteen slender shafts, reeded, of iron, richly gilt, and at the back by pilasters and partitions. Grecian ornaments, of varied design, in running patterns, with rosettes, wreaths, &c. adorn the fasciæ of the different tiers; the whole presenting a blaze of golden enrichments. Brass guards are continued round the fronts of the upper boxes and slips, and of the upper and lower galleries. From plain gold-like brackets, attached to the bases of the shafts in the first and second tiers, rich cut-glass

\* The relative disposition and arrangements of the *Interior* will be readily comprehended by referring to the *Plans* in PLATE II. It will be seen from those Plans, that the Auditory is nearly in the centre of the building; the entrance hall, lobbies, rotunda, saloon, &c. being to the west; and the stage, its green-rooms, scene-rooms, flies, and other adjuncts, to the east.

lustres are suspended : each of four lights, having bell-glasses inverted over the burners.\* The seats of the pit are covered with crimson cloth, and a rail-work back has been recently attached to every alternate row.

The dress circle of boxes will contain,—(viz. 26 boxes, 9 persons in each) .....	234
The first circle, viz. 14 boxes, 14 in each .....	196
The second circle .....	480
Private boxes, viz. 20 boxes, 8 in each .....	160
Ditto, family ditto, viz. 16 boxes, 6 in each .....	96
Proscenium boxes, viz. 8 boxes, 8 in each .....	64
Slips .....	130
Pit .....	800
Lower gallery .....	550
Upper gallery .....	350
	<hr/>
	3060

The principal ceiling of the auditory is constituted by a vast circle, including two lesser ones, subdivided into numerous panelled compartments, having borderings enriched with roses in annulets, and in the greater spaces other ornaments, of a classic design, in white and gold. From an

\* The dress circle includes twenty-six boxes, each furnished with nine chairs ; and behind, and looking over them, are ten private or family boxes, let nightly, with six chairs each. The next, or first circle, contains fourteen public boxes, (with six private ones, let nightly, behind them,) and four private boxes at each extreme. The second tier, or upper circle, contains twenty-two double boxes, there being a row of boxes going round the circle, which is separated from the front-row by a partition about three feet high, and at each extreme are two private boxes. In the slips there are three larger boxes, which are parallel with the lower gallery. On each side of the pit there are three private boxes, and two larger public ones without seats. The general arrangement of the boxes, &c. is shewn in the *Longitudinal Section*, PLATE III., together with the roofing of the building, the stage, flies, &c. The roof of the Auditory is 77 feet 5 inches in breadth, between the extreme walls : its height from the pit floor is 48 feet.

opening in the centre, a very large cut-glass lustre descends, which is lit by gas, supplied from the Gas-works in Peter Street, Westminster.

The *Proscenium*, as now arranged, is exceedingly different from its original state, as designed by Mr. Wyatt, and from which it has been several times altered. On each side, elevated on a lofty pedestal, forming a parallelogram, are two demi-columns, of the Corinthian order, fluted,\* and superbly gilt, supporting an entablature, above which, in semicircular niches, are allegorical statues of Tragedy and Comedy. The coved ceiling is a continuation of the circular ceiling of the auditory; but the four panels into which it is divided are of greater width than those of the other parts of the circle. Beneath it, spanning over the curtain, is an elliptical arch, from which festoons (painted) of crimson drapery descend; and on an inner plane, in the centre, are the royal arms, within a garter, with the supporters couchant, in subdued colouring. On each side, between the columns, are three private boxes, the fronts of which are of crimson, plaited; the plaits of each middle box centering in a radiant head of Apollo, gilt: there is, also, another private box, nearly level with the stage, in the pedestal, or basement, on each side, masked by a pierced ornamental (moveable) panel, exhibiting a lyre amidst foliage, in dead and burnished gold. The King's box is that between the columns, on the left of the auditory, which ranges with the dress circle: its ante-room is a handsome square apartment, surmounted by a dome, sustained on archoids, which spring from a surrounding entablature, supported by four Corinthian columns.

\* These columns are of wood; they are hollow, and the apparent flutings are real apertures, through which the performances can be seen from the private boxes: the capitals are of plaster.

Between the acts, during a performance, a rich drop scene is substituted for the curtain: it was executed by Marinari and Stanton (the figures being by the latter), at an expense of about 700*l*. It is a fine composition of Grecian ruins and figures, within a highly-wrought fancy bordering, or frame, heightened with gold.\* Another elegant drop scene, by Stanton, which is used between the play and the after-piece, includes the Coliseum, and other remains of classic architecture, with figures, landscapes, &c. The weight of each of these drops, with the roller and necessary adjuncts, is about 800*lbs*.

	FT.	IN.
The width of the proscenium, in front, is .....	46	6
Ditto, at the curtain .....	40	0
Height of the proscenium, to the centre of the arch .....	43	0
Extent from the front of the stage to the curtain .....	12	9

The view of the interior of the house, from the stage, possesses great interest, and particularly so when the theatre is lit up and the audience assembled. An accurate idea of its general character may be conceived from **PLATE VI**.

In the construction of this building every care has been taken to secure the safety of the audience in case of fire, independently of the provision made by water-tanks, engines, &c. All the passages and lobbies behind the pit and boxes are of stone; and the staircases, as mentioned before, are of the same materials; as are also the staircases and landings to the galleries. They are likewise sufficiently capacious to contain the entire number of persons that can, at any one time, be assembled in the theatre; by which arrangement a safe egress for the company is, at all times, certain. This fact cannot be too generally known, as it must neces-

\* In the *Transverse Section*, marked A, in **PLATE V**, the Proscenium is shewn, together with the drop scene above described.

sarily tend to lessen the apprehension and danger which a sudden alarm would otherwise create.\*

The *Stage*, although of great extent, and longer than that of Covent Garden, is sometimes insufficient for the convenient representation of the spectacles introduced here; notwithstanding that a large archway has been cut through the main wall, eastward, into an adjoining building originally intended for a scene-room. There is, likewise, a deficiency of depth in the cellar below the mezzonine floor, which occasionally prevents the machinery, in pantomimes, from being worked so readily as the business requires. The manager's room, actresses' dressing-rooms, and various other apartments, are on the north side of the stage; and on the south are the two green-rooms, the prompter's room, the

\* "All the doorways throughout these [viz. the auditory] parts of the house are from five to six feet wide, according to circumstances; the steps and landings of the staircases to the galleries are five feet, and those to the boxes six. In the principal stone staircases, leading to the boxes, the ascent is first in one flight and then in two; and so on, alternately, to the top; the centre flights being exactly double the width of the side flights; so that the conflux of persons from the side flights never can choke or obstruct the centre flights; and these staircases are capable of containing, upon their *own steps and landings*, a much greater number of persons than the *whole* of the boxes can contain: consequently, the ingress and egress to and from the boxes never can be obstructed for want of room upon the staircases. The whole of the boxes are capable of containing 1286 persons; and the two staircases in question will jointly contain 1528 persons. The two-shilling gallery is calculated to contain 550 persons; and the two staircases leading to it will contain 868 persons. The one-shilling gallery contains space for 350 spectators, and the staircase leading to that gallery will contain 480 persons; allowing (as in both the preceding instances) as much room to each person as they are supposed to occupy when sitting in the theatre; and, of course, more than they would really occupy upon a crowded staircase."—Wyatt's "*Observations*," §c. p. 40.



actors' dressing-rooms, &c. In the principal *Green Room* is a large looking-glass, in panels, measuring 8 feet 3 inches by 4 feet 6 inches, for the performers to adjust their dresses by, previously to appearing before the audience; and, on brackets, at the sides, are busts of Shakspeare and Garrick. On another bracket, between the windows, is a marble bust of "*Mrs. Sarah Siddons*," the *Tragic Muse*, which was sculptured by James Smith in 1812, and presented to the Green Room by the late Samuel Whitbread, Esq. in August 1814. Opposite to it is a cast of the bust of Edmund Kean, Esq., by S. Joseph. The inferior Green Room, which contains a piano-forte, for the use of the performers and choristers, is part of a separate building, attached to the outer wall of the theatre. There are also ranges of stabling for twenty horses, a large yard, &c. on this side, without the walls. The stage is, principally, enlightened by gas, the pipes being arranged below the flooring, and having their extremities partially inserted in grooves, so as to admit of their being moved in accordance with the play of the machinery. In the winter season, warm air is conveyed into the theatre from two large pipes, at the back of the stage, which communicate with two furnaces in the lower floor beneath.

	FT.	IN.
The extent of the stage, from the orchestra to the back wall, is . .	96	3
Width of the stage from wall to wall . . . . .	77	5
Depth from the upper floor to the mezzanine floor . . . . .	8	6
Ditto, from mezzanine floor to the ground . . . . .	10	0
Ditto, of the excavation called the well . . . . .	3	0
Height of the flats, or transverse scenes . . . . .	21	0
Width of ditto, viz. 28 feet; each half . . . . .	14	0
Height of wings, or side scenes . . . . .	21	0
Width of ditto . . . . . from 5 to	8	0

The stage-floor is pierced by numerous apertures for traps, descent and raising of machinery, &c. The floor beneath it,

to a person unaccustomed to such places, has the appearance of a confused wilderness of wheels, ropes, blocks, windlasses, and other apparatus, of too multitudinous a kind to admit of description in these pages. Among the recent alterations was a complete removal of the stage doors; and all entries before the curtain were made through a tent-like opening in a superb drop-scene, but the latter was disused after the first season.

Over the stage are the *Flies*, &c., in two stories, which are wholly supported by the side walls, and by trusses attached to the roof: these contain the windlasses, machinery, &c. employed in lowering the curtain, drops, borders, clouds, cars, and other appendages to the scene. In the line with the upper flies, over the auditory, are carpenters' shops, property-rooms, store-rooms, &c. The *Painting Room*, which is over the eastern extremity of the stage, is 79 feet in length, and nearly 31 feet in height and width.

The *Scene Room* is a detached building at the north-east angle of the theatre, but having a communication with the stage, and also with Drury Lane. Its length is 73 feet 3 inches, and its medium width about 30 feet, exclusive of a return towards the south of 15 feet 9 inches in width, and 26 feet 6 inches in length. Beneath it is a *Tank*, and a small *Printing Office*, where all the play-bills, plays, &c. issued from the theatre, are printed: over it are property work-shops.

In a long cellar, beyond the outer wall of the stage, is a powerful engine, on Bramah's principle, which, when full-manned, will throw water upwards of 10 feet above the roof of the building; and on the roof itself are several tanks, which are supplied from the New River.\*

\* When the theatre was rebuilt, a very expensive combination of machinery, including pipes for the conveyance of water into every part of the house, was constructed, under the direction of the far-famed Sir William Con-

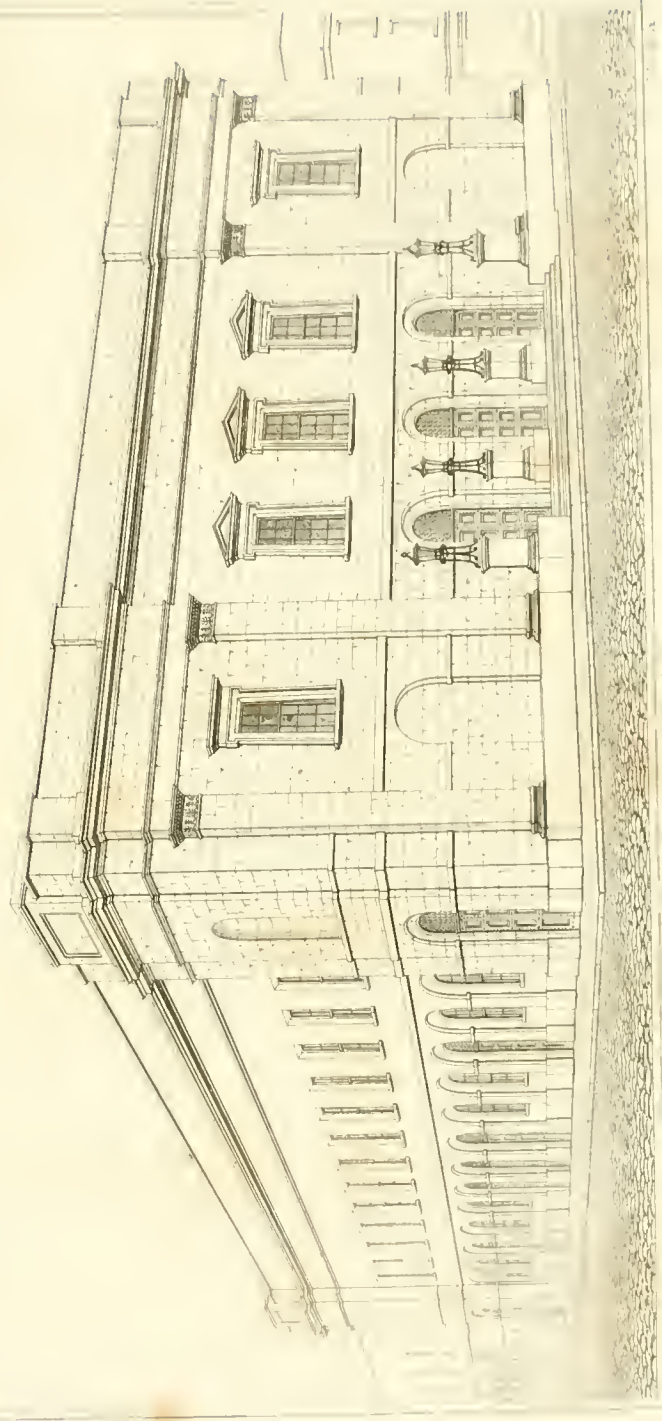
Among the many alterations which have been made in this theatre, since its construction by Mr. Wyatt, has been the piercing the main walls by numerous internal doorways; the original communications between the different parts of the house having been so few and so extremely inconvenient, that the business could not be properly carried on. An arched passage, also, has been made under the orchestra, which communicates, by a flight of stairs at each end, with the private boxes on the south side of the theatre; the entrance to which, from Woburn Court, being only accessible on foot, was extremely objectionable to the company, who were obliged to alight from their carriages in Brydges Street.

greve, for the purpose of extinguishing fire; but as the efficacy of the apparatus could never be tried without endangering the theatre by *drowning*, its assumed utility is still unascertained; and it is probable, that at the present time the machinery is not in a state of sufficient order to admit of the experiment being made. The first supply of water was to be obtained from a cylindrical air-tight reservoir, of cast-iron, placed under ground, at the back of the stage, and sufficiently capacious for 400 hogsheads. This being half filled with water, and furnished with a powerful condensing air-pump, could, by means of a series of levers contained in a small engine-house on the outside of the building, be so acted on by the condensation of the air in the other half of the reservoir, (equal to about six atmospheres,) that the whole of the water would be forced through the various branch-pipes to the very highest part of the theatre, and by other machinery and branches be directed to the precise spot that might be on fire. Even the Apollo's head, which originally formed the central decoration of the pit ceiling, was made the mask of a concealed pipe, 8 inches in length, having a perforated rose at each end, through which the water was to be thrown over the entire auditory, in a rotatory discharge, the pipe being caused to revolve upon its centre by the force of the fluid rushing from it, on the same principle of action as the fire-work called the Catharine wheel. On a *small* scale and model, there is no doubt but that this contrivance was a successful one; yet, independently of various objections that might be urged against its applicability to a theatre, it has been said that the reservoir never could be made sufficiently air-tight to ensure its effectual co-operation in the moment of danger.

## REFERENCES TO THE PLATES.

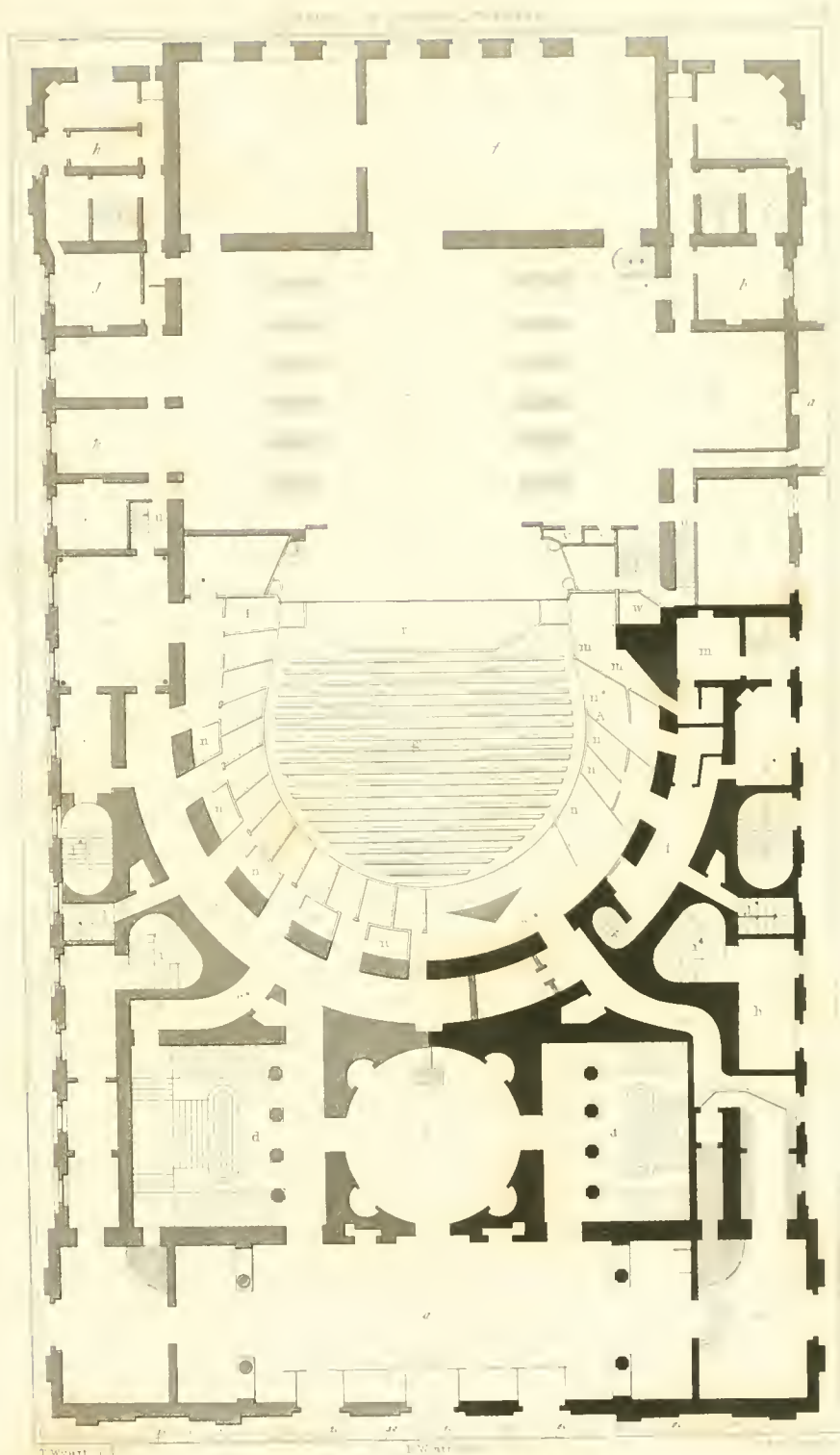
PLATE I. — *Exterior View of the Theatre*, from the north-west, shewing the Brydges Street and Russel Street fronts.

✓ PLATE II. — *Plans*. — The general form, interior divisions, and principal arrangements of the building, are exhibited in this print, viz. A., which shews the ground plan of the south side of the theatre, according to the design of the original architect, Mr. Wyatt; B., the stage-flooring; and C., the plan of the dress circle of boxes, agreeably to the alterations made in the auditory by Mr. Beazley. The particular references are as follow: a. Entrance Hall. b.b. Waiting Lobbies. c. Rotunda. d.d. Principal Staircases to the Boxes. e. Pit Passage. e\*. Pit Lobby. e\*\*. Entrance to Dress Circle. f. Lobby to Private Boxes. g. Pit. h.h. Present Entrance to the Upper Gallery. i. Staircase to Lower Gallery. i\*. Private communication from Dress Boxes to Dress Circle. j. King's Staircase. j\*. Upper Gallery Staircase. k. Box Entrance from Woburn Court. k\*. Staircase to the Upper Gallery, now shut up. l. Private Lobby to the King's Room. l\*. Private Box Staircase. m.m.m. Mrs. Coutts's Ante-room, Lobby, and Box. n\*. Duke of York's Box. n.n.n.n. Private, or Family Boxes. o\*. Private Box on Stage. o. The King's Room. p. The King's Box. q. Dress Circle Lobby. r. Orchestra. s. Proscenium and Stage. t. Acting Manager's Room, with Treasury over it. u.u. Staircases to the Boxes, &c.; that on the left leads also to the Treasury. v. Private Box on Stage. w. Quick-changing Room, communicating with principal Green-room. x. Small Property-room. y. Prompter's Box. z. Principal Green-room. a. Inferior Green-room. b. Mr. Elliston's Room. c. Staircase to the Flies. c\*. General Staircase. d. Water Closet. e. Music-room. f.f. Property and Scene-rooms; the southernmost being occasionally used to lengthen the stage: over them is the Painting Room. g. Hall at Stage Entrance. h. Occa-









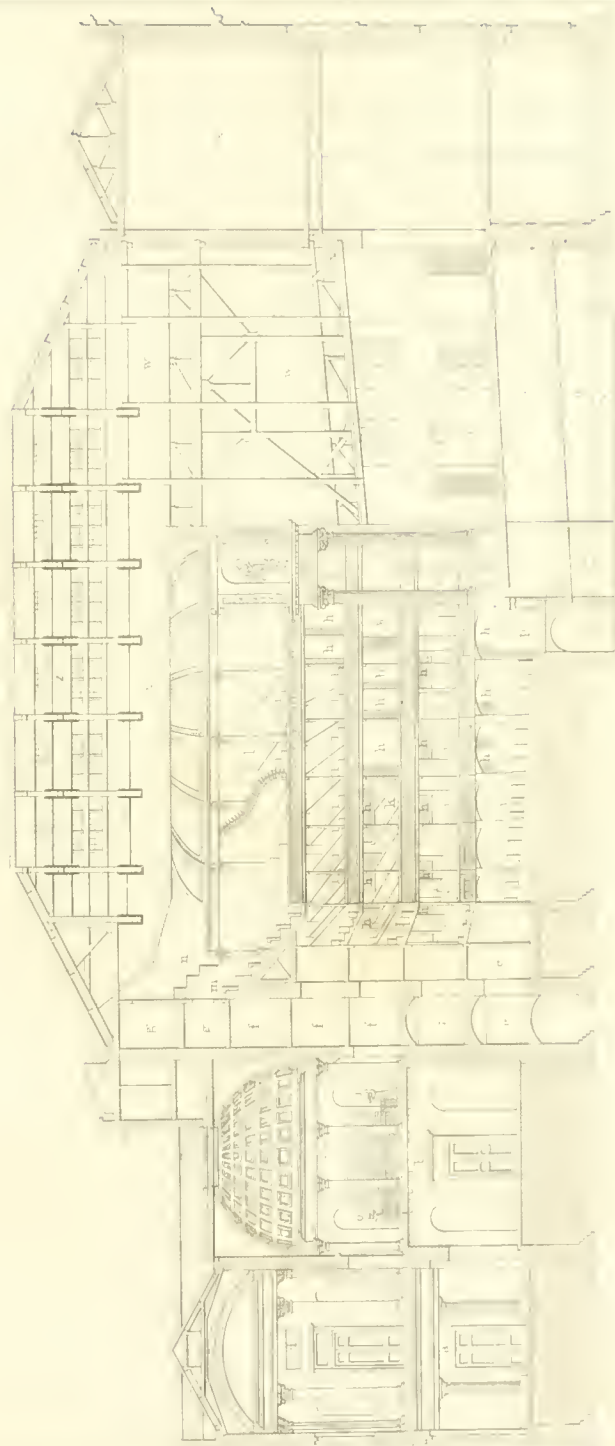
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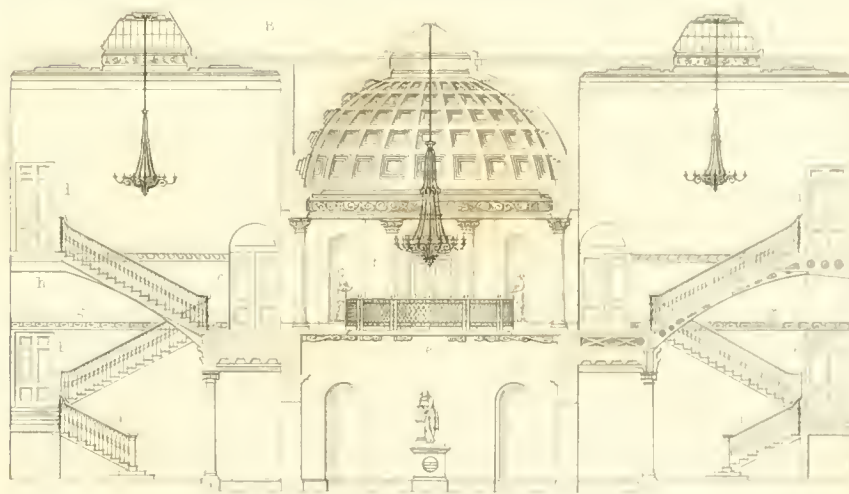
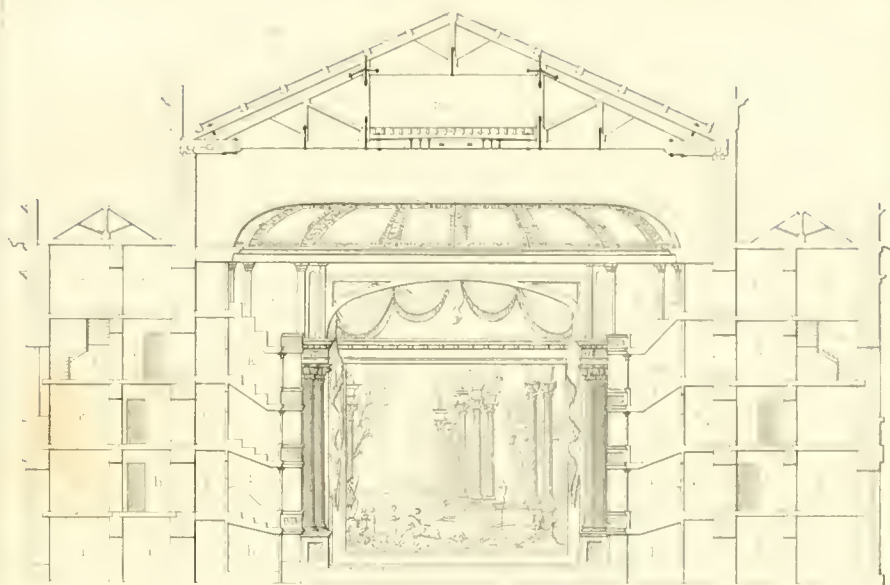
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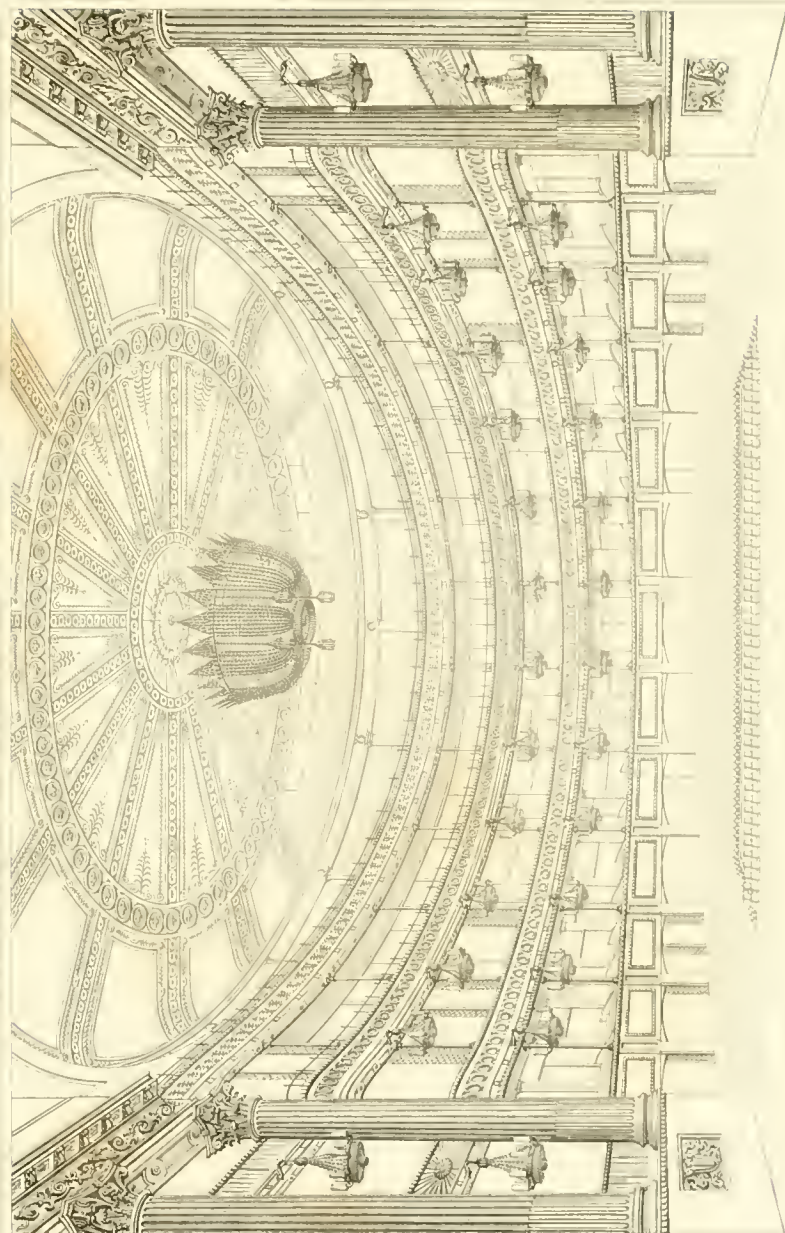






THE GREAT HALL







sional Entrance. *i.* General Staircase. *j.* Committee-room. *k. k. k.* Scene Depositories.

PLATE III.—*Perspective View of the Rotunda*, from the entrance to the Lobby of the first Circle, looking into the Saloon.

PLATE IV.—*Longitudinal Section*, from west to east, looking northward. *a.* Entrance Hall. *b.* Rotunda, lower story. *c.* Ditto, upper story. *d.* Saloon. *e. e.* Pit Lobbies. *f. f. f. f.* Corridors to the Boxes and Slips. *g. g.* Lobbies to Upper and Lower Galleries. *h. h. h. h.* Private Boxes. *i.* Pit. *j.* Dress Circle of Boxes. *k. k.* First and Second Circles of Boxes. *l.* Slips. *m.* Lower Gallery. *n.* Upper Gallery. *o.* Proscenium Boxes. *p.* Orchestra. *q.* Arched Passage beneath ditto; made to continue the line of communication across the house. *r.* Stage. *s.* Continuation of ditto, through an arched aperture of 12 feet diameter, to the extreme wall. *t.* Mezzanine Floor. *u. u.* Cellars under ditto. *v.* Well, or Excavation, for letting down scenery. *w. w.* Upper and Lower Flies. *x.* Painting-room. *y.* Carpenters' Shops, Property-rooms, &c. *z.* Roof.

PLATE V.—*A. Transverse Section* before the Proscenium. *a. a. a. a.* Lobbies to the Pit and Private Boxes. *b. b. b. b.* Ditto to Dress Circle. *c. c. c. c.* Ditto to First Circle. *d. d. d. d.* Ditto to Second Circle. *e. e.* Staircases to Slips. *f. f.* Lobbies to ditto. *g. g.* Gallery Passages. *h. h. h. h.* Private Boxes. *i. i.* Dress Boxes. *j. j.* Boxes, First Circle. *k. k.* Ditto, Second Circle. *l. l.* Slips. *m.* Carpenters' Work-shops, &c.—*B. Section through the Grand Staircases and Rotunda.* *a. a.* Principal Flights of Steps. *b. b.* Entrances to Dress Circle. *c. c.* Ditto, First Circle. *d. d.* Ditto, Second Circle. *e.* Rotunda, lower story. *f.* Ditto, upper story. *g.* Stone Gallery-floor. *h.* Iron cradling supporting the upper flights.

PLATE VI.—*Interior of the Auditory*, as seen from the Stage, shewing the general forms and decorations of the house in 1824.



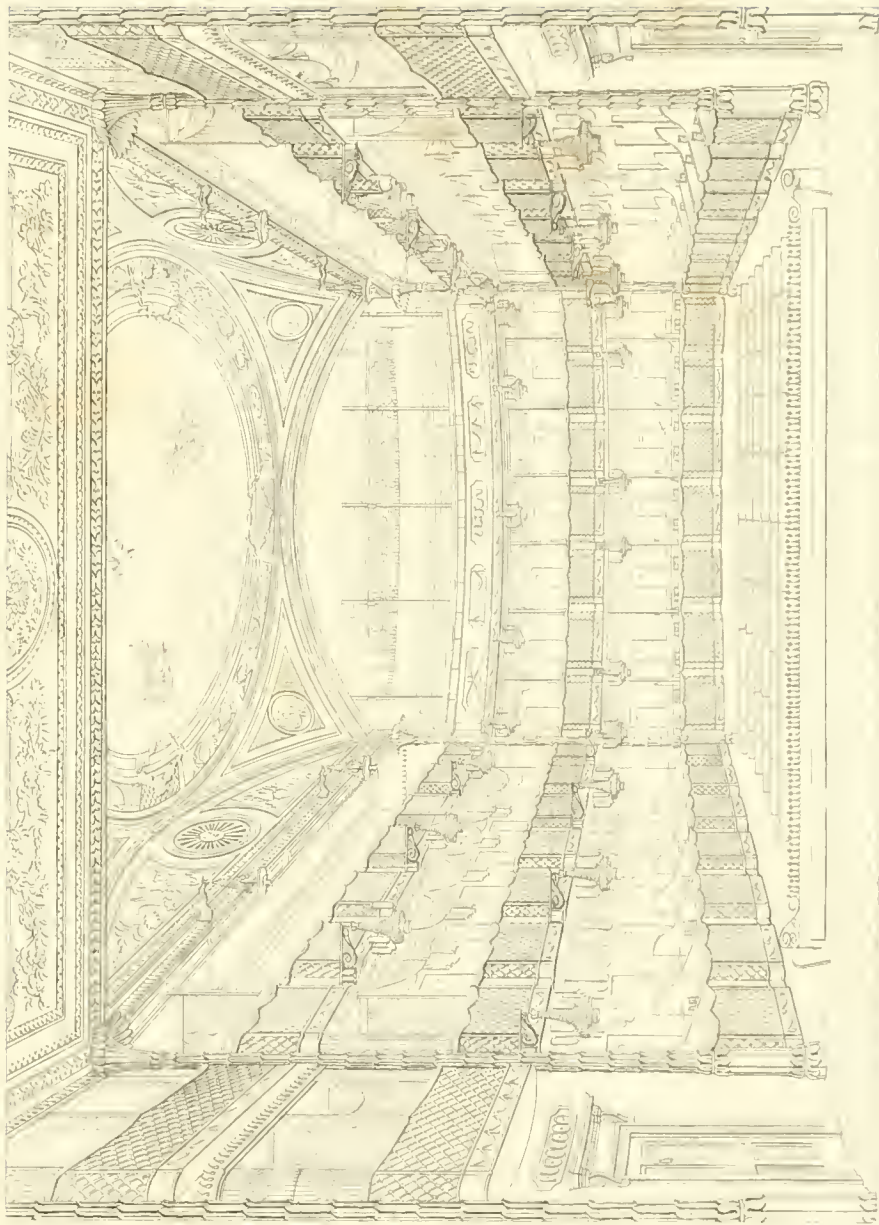
AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
HAYMARKET THEATRE;  
By C. DIBDIN.

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THIS Theatre stands on the eastern side of a street called the Haymarket, where a playhouse was first erected in 1720, 1721, by a builder named *Potter*, who speculated upon the probability of letting it to companies of foreign performers, which, at that period, were much encouraged by the nobility, and through whose patronage they procured licenses *pro tempore*. No sooner was the theatre finished than it was opened, by “special permission,” with a French play, called “*La Fille à la Morte ; ou le Badeaut de Paris :*” the company performing under the designation of “The French Comedians of his Grace the Duke of Montague.”\*

In December 1723 the theatre was occupied by an English company of comedians, who were advertised as novices ; but these not succeeding, the French company resumed their

\* The first announcement was in the following terms :—“December 15, 1721. At the New Theatre in the Haymarket, between Little Suffolk Street and James Street, which is now completely finished, will be performed a French Comedy, as soon as the rest of the actors arrive from Paris, who are duly expected.” They opened on the 29th of December : Boxes and Pit 5s., Gallery 2s. 6d. On the second night the prices were altered to Boxes 4s., Pit 2s. 6d., Gallery 1s. 6d. During some time they played four nights per week ; and afterwards only two nights, till the 4th of May. In the following July a Concert was advertised, in which it is styled the “New French Theatre ;” and a French company performed the following winter.





performances in 1724, although for a very short term ; and the house was let for occasional concerts and similar entertainments, till 1726, when Italian operas were performed in it, by subscription ; and, towards the conclusion of the season, Signora Violante, an accomplished rope-dancer, with a “troop of tumblers,” added “extraordinary feats to the attractions of the opera.” In 1730 the house was again occupied by English tenants, and the performances conducted upon a very respectable plan ; but, in 1731, gladiators and back-sword-men made an arena of its stage, and were patronised both by the English and foreign nobility ; the latter of whom were, principally, in the suite of the Duke of Lorrain, then on a visit to the British Court. In 1732 an English opera, upon the Italian model, or consisting of recitative and air, was produced here by the well-known Harry Carey ; and in the same year Signora Violante resumed her performances. The Beggar’s Opera was also acted ; in which the celebrated Miss Woffington performed, on the same night, the characters of Macheath, Mrs. Peachum, and Diana Trapes : so early had the prevalent custom of an individual playing several characters in the same piece commenced.

In 1733 Theophilus Cibber, Harper, (the competitor of Quin in Falstaff,) and others, revolted from Drury Lane, and opened the Haymarket ; and although an attempt was made to suppress them by Highmore, the patentee of Drury Lane, it did not succeed ; and Harper, who had been committed to Bridewell at his instance, was “soon after,” says Davies, “triumphantly delivered by the Court of King’s Bench.” The reason of this decision, as appears from Cibber, was that Harper was not a “vagabond” within the meaning of the Act of the 12th year of Queen Anne, “he being a

housekeeper, and having a vote for the Westminster Members of Parliament."

In 1734-5 Fielding, the dramatist and novelist, opened this theatre with a company whom he advertised as "The Great Mogul's Company of Comedians;" for whose acting he wrote a satirical piece called "Pasquin," which contained very severe reflections upon the Walpole administration, and was performed for more than fifty successive nights. Fielding's company continued performing in 1736 and 1737.

In 1737 this theatre, together with that in Goodman's Fields, was closed by authority, in consequence of the passing of Sir Robert Walpole's licensing act, which, Smollet says, was meant as a direct attack by the minister on the liberties of the press.\*

\* The occasion of this act was as follows:—Giffard, the manager of Goodman's Fields Theatre, received from an anonymous author a farce, called "The Golden Rump," which contained such violent sarcasms on the ministry, that Giffard, from fear or policy, carried it to Walpole, who brought the affair before the House. The purport of the bill passed was, "to limit the number of play-houses; to subject all dramatic writings to the inspection of the Lord Chamberlain, and to compel managers to take out a license for every piece before it could appear on the stage." The bill, notwithstanding it passed, experienced a violent opposition within the House, and a general one without; yet there does not appear any novelty in its enactments; for theatres and plays had been subject to the control of a licensing power, under the name of Master of the Revels, or Lord Chamberlain, from before the time of Elizabeth, at least. The licensing officer granted or prohibited, as he pleased, license for theatre or play; and from such plays as he licensed he expunged every passage which appeared to him objectionable. His fee for a play had originally been a mark; but in 1630, when Sir Henry Herbert held the office of Master of the Revels, it was 2*l*. It is now 2*l*. 2*s*.

Giffard received from Walpole 1000*l*., as a reward for his information, and a compensation for the loss which he sustained by the closing of his theatre.



In 1738 a temporary license to open the Haymarket Theatre was granted by the Lord Chamberlain to a French company. This circumstance excited general indignation; so averse were the public to the act which had expelled the English performers from this theatre: the consequence was, that the foreigners, on the first night of their appearance, were driven from the stage with contempt and execration; and, although they afterwards appealed in a most humiliating manner to British generosity, imploring permission to perform three nights in either of the patent theatres, to enable them to pay their debts and ensure a passage to France, their plea and petition were equally disregarded.

In 1741 the theatre opened with English Operas. On the 6th Feb. 1744, Macklin, from hostility to the patentees of Drury Lane Theatre, brought a company here, among whom was the celebrated Samuel Foote, justly styled the British Aristophanes; but Macklin's scheme failed, and he returned penitent and apologising to Drury Lane; being succeeded in the management of the Haymarket by Theophilus Cibber, who appears to have acted without a license, and to have evaded the penalty by stratagem.\*

In 1747 Foote commenced here, on his own account, a new species of entertainment, written and performed by himself; which consisted of satirical representations and imitations of public and remarkable characters, as well as a ludicrous exposure of the reigning follies of the day. It was called "The Diversions of a Morning," and was at first prohibited and suspended through the opposition of Lacey.

\* His advertisement ran thus: —

"At Cibber's Academy in the Haymarket will be a Concert; after which will be exhibited (*gratis*) a rehearsal, in form of a play, called Romeo and Juliet."

the patentee of Drury Lane; but the nobility and public in general so effectually espoused the cause of Foote, that Lacey, fearful of the ultimate consequence of his hostility, withdrew his objection, and Foote recommenced his performance; changing his title to "Foote's giving Tea." In the following year he produced "An Auction of Pictures," similar in its design and execution to the former entertainments; all of which were as profitable as they were popular. They were performed in the morning.

On Jan. 14th, 1749, a dreadful Riot took place, and the house was nearly demolished; in consequence of a shameful and ridiculous hoax which was practised here, either to decide a wager, or ascertain the extent of public gullibility. The exhibition advertised to take place was called "The Bottle Conjuror."\* In the November following, another riot was occasioned by a license having been granted to a fresh company of foreigners; whom, although the multitude held them in utter detestation, the nobility patronised very warmly. This attempt was decisive of their fate; and after a severe contention between the favourable and hostile parts of the audience, during which "swords were drawn and much mischief done;" the patrons of the players were defeated, and the hopes of the latter completely destroyed. After playing two or three subsequent nights to empty benches, the foreigners were obliged to withdraw; many of them labouring under such extreme distress as to be reduced to the necessity of asking public charity.

\* An advertisement stated a number of unprecedented tricks which the conjurer was to perform; at the conclusion of which he was, in sight of the audience, to compress himself within a quart-bottle. The house overflowed, but no conjuror made his appearance; for having secured the money at the doors, he left the deluded audience to wreak their vengeance on the interior of the theatre. The author of this deception was never detected.

This theatre continued to be the scene of various species of amusements till Aug. 21, 1755, when it was occupied by a company under the direction of Cibber, who, in 1758, obtained a general license of the Lord Chamberlain; under sanction of which, in 1760, Foote, having collected a company, amused the public with several dramas, his own productions, which proving very advantageous to him, he determined upon establishing the house as a regular summer theatre: but he was prevented putting his scheme into practice till 1762; the theatre having been, for that interval, previously let to a teacher of dancing dogs. Upon the secession of the canine company, Foote reinstated himself, gave lectures upon oratory, and continued giving "*Tea*," and trifling but witty dramas, without interruption, till 1766, when, (Feb. 7,) falling from his horse, while on a visit to Lord Mexborough, he broke his leg; which circumstance so interested the Duke of York, (brother to his late Majesty,) who was present, in his favour, that he obtained for Foote a royal license, or patent, to act plays at the Haymarket Theatre during his natural life; the seasons commencing on the 15th of May, and concluding on the 15th Sept.

Foote now purchased of the executors of Potter the lease of the premises, and immediately began improving and enlarging the theatre; with which he incorporated a house in Little Suffolk Street, removed two shops which were in front, in the Haymarket, built a portico, increased the number of avenues and entrance doors, and added a second gallery to the auditory.

Having thus become proprietor of a patent establishment, (which from that period has been called a Theatre Royal,) Foote continued, during his regular seasons, to entertain the public by the numerous and unique efforts of his truly

original pen ; and during the remaining part of each year he occasionally let the theatre for concerts, and entertainments of various character ; including, at different periods, a puppet show *at noon*, and an Italian Fantoccini, representing petite comedies, dances, and pantomimic changes.

In 1776 he ceased to be a manager, having transferred, by an agreement, signed 21st December, to the late Mr. G. Colman, his interest in the remainder of his lease, and his right in the patent, in consideration of a life annuity of 1600*l*. His decease, in the October following, terminated this agreement, and Mr. Colman became possessed of the concern for about 800*l*.\*

In 1779 Mr. Colman obtained of the “ tenants in possession, remainder, and reversion,” a new lease, for the term of thirty-one years, subsequent to the expiration of the old one, and the *license* was continued to him by royal authority. Colman died in 1794, and the property devolved upon his son, the present Mr. George Colman, dramatist, who has been recently appointed *Licensor* under the Lord Chamberlain.

In 1790 Italian operas were performed here by the company belonging to the King’s Theatre, in consequence of that edifice having been burnt down in 1789 ; and in the winter of 1793 it was opened under the Drury Lane patent, till the new Drury Lane Theatre was finished in the following March.

\* Foote also made over to Colman all his right and property in every dramatic piece he had produced ; and bound himself to give him the refusal of every drama which he might subsequently write ; as well as to perform at no other theatre than the Haymarket. He was afterwards attacked by a paralytic fit, while performing, from which he recovered, and retired to Brighton. Being advised to reside in France, he proceeded to Dover, intending to cross to Calais the next morning (20 Oct. 1777), but having been seized with a shivering fit, he expired ere he could embark.

In 1795\* Mr. Colman obtained an extension of his lease for seventeen years, at a rental of 400*l.* per annum, and a further extension in 1805, when he sold a moiety of the theatre to Messrs. Morris, Winston, and Tahourdin, for (I believe) 8000*l.*;† but the latter gentleman soon after transferred his share (an eighth) to Mr. Morris.

In 1810 the duration of the acting season under the patent was extended first to five, and then to seven months in each year; but from a later arrangement, between the respective proprietors of the patent theatres, to which the Lord Chamberlain was a party, the Haymarket now opens on the 15th of June and closes on the 15th of October.

Previously to the year 1820 Mr. Colman transferred his moiety of the theatre to Mr. Morris, who, in consequence, became possessed of seven-eighths of the property; Mr. Winston retaining his original one-eighth; and these gentlemen, at the conclusion of the season in that year, pulled down the old theatre, and, at the distance of a few feet southward from its former site, erected a new one, at the cost (as reported) of 18,000*l.*; which was opened on July 4, 1821.

\* On February 3, 1794, a dreadful accident occurred here, through the loyal solicitude of the public to see their late Majesties George III. and Queen Charlotte, who on that night visited the theatre.

The entrance to the pit was by a descent of several steps, and, such was the rush of the crowd, that many persons were forced forward so impetuously that they fell over each other, and were immediately overwhelmed by numbers falling upon them. On this calamitous occasion, fifteen persons were either suffocated or trampled to death, while many who survived the awful predicament were seriously injured.

† Mr. Morris (Mr. Colman's brother-in-law) held a lucrative situation in the War Office; Mr. Winston was proprietor of a provincial theatre, and is now connected in an official capacity with Drury Lane Theatre; Mr. Tahourdin was an attorney.



## DESCRIPTION OF THE THEATRE.

The Haymarket Theatre\* (which was erected from the designs of John Nash, Esq., Architect) is partly of stone and partly of brick; the form is rectangular, as shewn in the ground plan, in the accompanying print; on which also the general measurements are marked, and references given to the various parts of the building. The entrance, or western front, is distinguished by a handsome portico of the Corinthian order: the entablature and pediment are supported by six columns, and the members of the former are continued to the extremities of the side walls. Under the portico are five doorways, (within partial inclosures of iron rail-work,) surmounted by semicircular fan-lights; above which are five oblong windows, giving light to the saloon.

The three middle doors lead to the boxes; the outer, on the right, to the box-office, and that on the left to the pit. In the intermediate spaces are four large lamps or lanterns for gas. The gallery entrances are on each side, without the portico; and above them, at the height of about ten

\* This Theatre appears to have been a regular school or nursery of performers for the winter houses. From a number of popular actors and actresses, who have made their *debut* in a patent theatre in London at the "Summer house," the following are selected as names of importance: Messrs. Foote, J. Palmer, Edwin, J. Bannister, Henderson, Matthews, Elliston, Liston, Young, Terry, &c.; Miss Fenton, (afterwards Dutchess of Bolton,) the original Polly in the Beggar's Opera; Mr. Abingdon; Miss Farren, (now Countess of Derby,) Mrs. Wells; Miss George, (now Lady Oldmixon); Miss Logan, (now Mrs. Gibbs); Mrs. Powell, (now Mrs. Renaud); and Miss Wilkinson, (now Mrs. Mountain).

feet, are circular windows: two other windows, of similar form and dimensions, are inserted over the cornice of the entablature. In the central space, between the pediment and the upper cornice, is a recessed panel, or frame, forming a long parallelogram, and containing nine circular rosette windows, which open, upon pivots, to the upper gallery: all the spandrils of the panels are filled by architectural enrichments. A plain parapet terminates the whole. The entrance to the stage is in the eastern front, in Suffolk Street. The exterior width of the theatre is 61 feet; its height to the top of the parapet 47 feet 9 inches; and its length 134 feet 6 inches.\*

*The Auditory* differs from those of the other theatres in form; the sides being straight, and the centre a small segment of a large circle; but the fronts of the side boxes project semi-circularly.

The arch of the proscenium, and that part of the auditory where the side and front boxes connect, are supported by richly gilt palm-trees, instead of pillars, which produce a novel and imposing effect, through their dissimilitude to customary embellishments.

The fronts of the boxes are decorated with raised chequered or net-work ornaments of gold, on a reddish purple ground. The seats and curtains are crimson, and the insides of the boxes morone. The ceiling is neat and fanciful, but it has not the usual characteristic of a modern theatre, a pendant central lustre and gas-lights. Indeed, this is the only patent theatre in which gas is not used, it being wholly lighted with oil, and spermaceti candles; the latter exhibited in a very handsome circle of cut-glass chandeliers,

\* The ground rent of this theatre is about five guineas per foot in front, and three guineas for the back part of the premises.

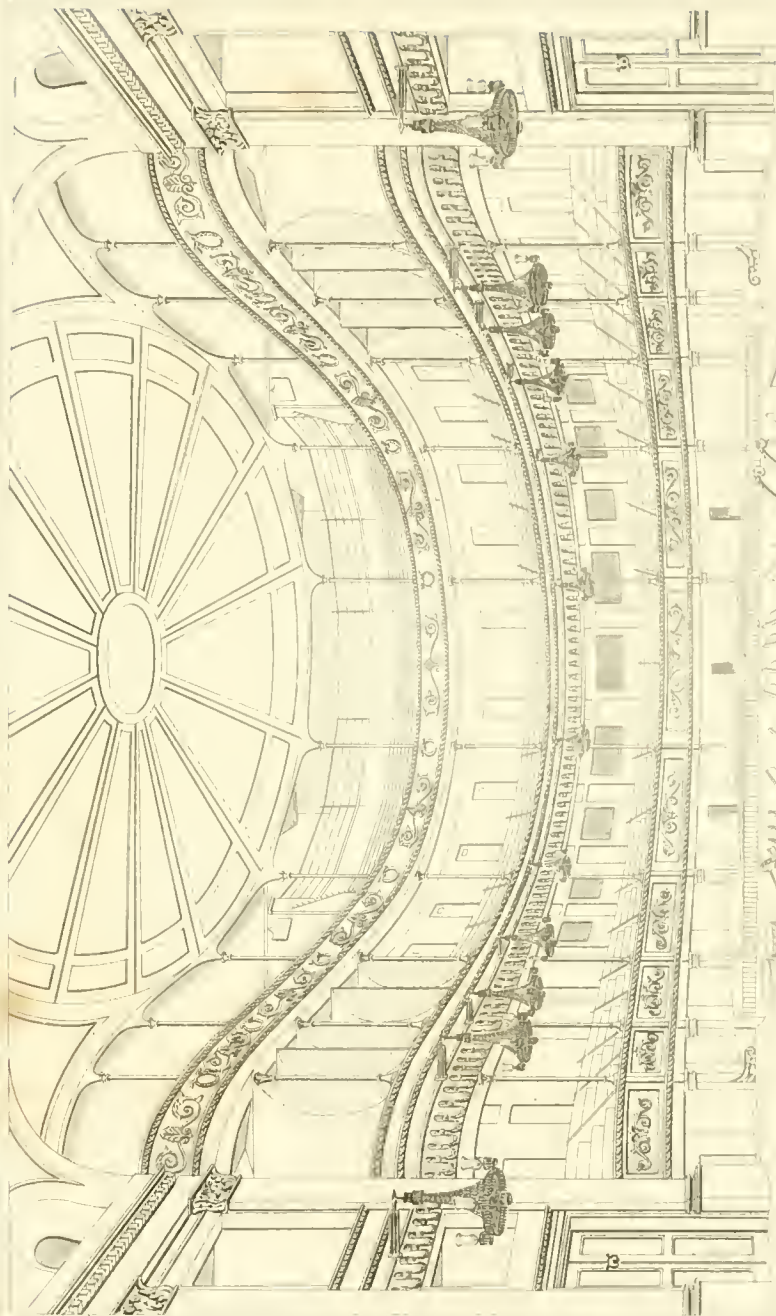
holding some five and others six lights. There are two circles or tiers of boxes, besides half-tiers, parallel with the lower gallery. In the first circle are five private boxes, and on the second tier, eight. The Saloon, which fronts Charles Street, is elegantly fitted up, and contains conveniences for refreshments.

The dramas peculiar to this theatre are light comedy, comic opera, and broad farce; tragedy, at present, being very rarely, if ever performed.\* The stage manager, in 1823, was Mr. T. Dibdin. The house holds upwards of 300l.†

\* The prices of admission are, boxes 5s. pit 3s. gallery 2s. upper gallery 1s. Half-price is not taken. The doors open at six, and the performance commences at seven o'clock.

† The company engaged at this theatre, (which is discriminatively termed the "Summer House,") is composed of the best provincial performers that can be collected; with the addition of three or four of the most popular actors from the winter houses, who join the Haymarket when their respective theatres close. But in the season 1823, this theatre possessed Mr. Liston exclusively, at a weekly salary of *fifty* pounds; and, in consequence of his attraction, he was engaged for the next season, 1824, at *sixty* pounds! Such was the singularly felicitous talent of this performer, that a crowded house was the invariable consequence of his every appearance. The policy of giving such large salaries has been doubted; but, as all merit is valuable in proportion to the interest it excites, it is difficult to ascertain with what prudence a *maximum* can be established in such cases; for, in whatever light the public may view the drama, the speculator in theatrical property will only survey it as a matter of profit and loss; and, consequently, proportion his expenditure to his expectations. But allowing it to be an impolicy, it is one that cannot be often committed, as it will only be practised in cases of rare merit, and I know not a more scarce commodity.

END OF THE ACCOUNT OF THE THEATRE.







AN ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
THEATRE ROYAL ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.

By C. DIBDIN.

---

THIS Theatre, which is situated in the Strand, opposite to Wellington Street, derived its origin from a Society of Artists, who, previously to the existence of the Royal Academy, built a large room, on the site of the present theatre, for the purpose of publicly exhibiting their productions, and named it the *Lyceum*. When the Royal Academy was established, Garrick bought the lease solely for the purpose of re-selling it, with a proviso that it should not be appropriated to any species of theatrical exhibition.

It afterwards came into the possession of a Mr. Lingham, a breeches-maker in the Strand, together with some adjoining premises: on which he erected a building, which was called a Theatre, and opened some time about 1790, for "music, dancing, and such like entertainments," under a license of the magistracy, agreeably to an Act of the 25th Geo. II. The first entertainments consisted of recitation and songs, under the title of "Mirth's Museum;" written by the late Mr. Cross (the dramatist): the music was composed by Mr. Reeve, a gentleman to whom the public are indebted for many popular melodies. The original "Great Room," (still within the premises,) was at that time occupied by Mr. R. K. Porter, for the exhibition of his panoramic pictures, the Siege of Seringapatam, and other battle pieces.

About 1794 or 95, Lingham granted a lease of the Lyceum to the late Dr. Arnold, who partly built a new theatre on the ground adjoining the Lyceum; with the intention of opening it, under a license from the magistracy, as a winter minor theatre. The proprietors of the patent theatres, however, taking alarm at the respectability which was likely to attach to performances so conducted in their immediate neighbourhood, succeeded in suppressing the license; and Lingham received back his lease, with the advantage of a new theatre, nearly completed, upon his premises; which he afterwards used or let for a variety of exhibitions within the pale of the law, till he obtained another license, and then a Mr. Handy joined in partnership with him, and exhibitions of music, dancing, and horsemanship, took place. About 1800, or 1801, the late Mr. Lonsdale, a dramatist and ingenious mechanist, produced here a novel species of entertainment, called the “Egyptiana.” It consisted of panoramic paintings, mechanical transformations, and recitation; and was illustrative of every thing connected with the history of Egypt, natural and philosophical; its inhabitants, animals, customs, and localities; but, from its possessing a character too chastely classical to become popular, it entirely failed of success. Soon after this a foreigner astonished and attracted *tout le monde*, by the introduction of the first “Phantasmagoria” ever seen in England; and, from exhibiting it, together with some curious mechanical subjects, in two or three seasons he realised a handsome fortune. In the year 1808 S. A. Arnold, Esq., son of Dr. Arnold, and present proprietor of the Lyceum, submitted to the late Earl of Dartmouth, then Lord Chamberlain, a plan for the establishment of an English Opera, and, having obtained from him, with the sanction of his late Majesty, the promise of a license, he entered into a negotiation for the purchase of Lingham’s interest in the

premises; which treaty was not concluded when Drury Lane Theatre was destroyed by fire in Feb. 1809. This event, and Mr. Sheridan becoming a bidder for the property, induced Lingham to advance his price so exorbitantly that, at length, Mr. Arnold became a purchaser at more than double the sum originally demanded. He immediately laid out several thousand pounds in completing and decorating the theatre; having first afforded an asylum to the Drury Lane Company on their own terms; which, to their credit be it spoken, were exactly double those originally required by Mr. Arnold. The Company acted here the three following seasons, under a special license granted by the Lord Chamberlain to Mr. Arnold, Mr. T. Sheridan, and the Trustees of the New Renters of Drury Lane Theatre; the summer seasons being occupied by the performances of the English Operas under the direction of Mr. Arnold, but, on account of the season of the year, on a small scale.

On the opening of the new Drury Lane Theatre in October 1812, the Lyceum continued closed during the winter seasons, in consequence of the appointment of Mr. Arnold to the management of the new Theatre; but, on the death of Mr. Whitbread, Drury Lane falling under the direction of a different Committee, the proprietor lost no time in redeeming the pledge he is said to have given to the Lord Chamberlain, of erecting a handsome theatre for the furtherance of his plan, by pulling down the old house, and rebuilding, under a new lease for ninety-nine years, from the Marquess of Exeter, and on a much enlarged site, the present ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE; the ground rent of which is stated to be 800*l.* per annum, and the sum altogether expended upon the building, furnishing, and decorating, (exclusive of the original purchase money,) amounting to little less than 80,000*l.*

Mr. Arnold announced his intention of opening his new theatre on a considerably extended scale, and for a much longer season, his license from the Lord Chamberlain having no restriction as to duration of performance; but the patentees of Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres, and the proprietors of the Haymarket theatre and Italian Opera, again taking alarm, such interest was made as succeeded in rendering Mr. Arnold's license harmless to the winter houses, by restricting his performances to four summer months in the year; in consequence of which, although the theatre has continued to open every summer since the year 1816, with considerable success, the proprietor has never been enabled, in so short a season, to realise the intention with which he embarked in so hazardous an undertaking.

The result of the foregoing circumstances has been, that the performances have been generally confined to light comic pieces, similar to the French *Vaudevilles*; and the opposition which Mr. Arnold is said to have uniformly experienced has induced him to abandon, in despair, the greater national object he had rationally contemplated.

It may not be amiss to add, that the winter and spring entertainments of Mr. Matthews, the Lent astronomical lectures of Mr. Bartley, and some other minor entertainments, have been carried on under a magistrate's license, and their success has enabled Mr. Arnold to overcome the difficulties with which his opponents are said to have obstructed him. During the last and present season (1823 and 24) the theatre has been perpetually crowded to overflow, by the attraction of two of those morally-equivocal productions of the German school, the one called "*Presumption*," and the other "*Der Freischütz*."

## DESCRIPTION OF THE THEATRE.

The front of the Theatre is on a line with the houses on the north side of the Strand. It has a stone portico, supported by eight ionic columns, between which are suspended large gas lanterns. The columns are connected by an inclosure of fancy iron-work, and support a stone balcony, with rounded balustrades; on the centre of which is a large square tablet, in which is engraven the word "LYCEUM." Above this are three tiers of windows (three in a tier) surmounted by a neat pediment; and the second and third tiers are divided by bands, on the upper of which appears "Theatre Royal," and on the lower "Lyceum Tavern." The lower part of the building, under the portico, contains two admission doors to the boxes and pit, and one window. The entrances to the two galleries, and another to the pit, are in a court communicating with the Strand and with Exeter Street; and in the latter street is the stage door. A long passage and a staircase lead to the boxes, whence there is an entrance to a long room, called "The Shrubbery," from a large quantity of green and flowering shrubs being placed in the centre and corners of the room, rising pyramidically to the ceiling. The walls are decorated with landscapes and figures, and there is at one extremity a commodious recess for the sale of refreshments. There is likewise a handsome oblong saloon, the walls of which are masked by plate glass, divided into irregular compartments by the intervention of branches of spreading trees, &c.

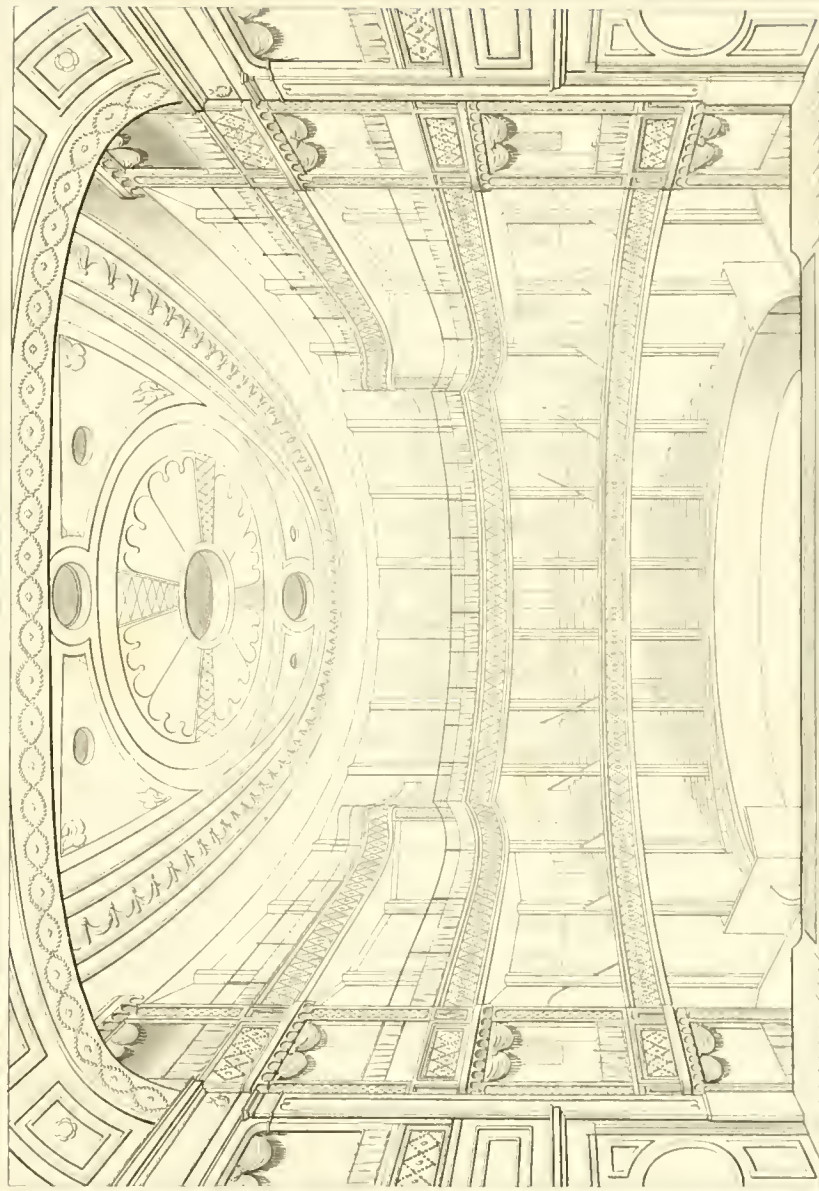
*The Auditory* forms a portion of an ellipsis, whose transverse diameter is 35 feet: the distance from the front boxes to the orchestra is only 30 feet. It contains two



circles or tiers of boxes, with two galleries, and slips on each side over the upper boxes; a range of private boxes behind the dress circle, and five on each side, above the level of the pit. The latter possesses a great advantage over those of the other theatres, (which is an important preventive against accidents on crowded nights,) in being raised, by a very unusual elevation, on an inclined plane, so that, from the front seat to the entrance door, where the money is taken, there is no step, either upwards or downwards. The auditory is richly decorated with composition ornaments and scrolls, in burnished and oiled gold. The prevailing colour is salmon, and the interior and backs of the boxes are lined with crimson moreen; the seats, cushions, &c. are dark green. The centre lustre contains forty gas burners; the glass chandeliers, which are elegant and twelve in number, are lighted by wax.

The Architect was Samuel Beazley, Esq. who has since erected the Dublin, Birmingham, and new Drury Lane Theatres. The Treasurer of this Theatre is R. B. Peake, Esq. who has written and produced here, and elsewhere, successfully, several very humorous farces.

ÉLÉVE . . . LON ON - THEAT . F





AN ACCOUNT  
OF  
THE ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE, WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

By C. DIBDIN.

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THERE are in London eight public places of amusement called MINOR THEATRES, viz. the Royal AMPHITHEATRE, near Westminster Bridge; the SURREY THEATRE, or Royal CIRCUS, in St. George's Fields; the Royal COBURG, Surrey side of Waterloo Bridge; SADLER'S WELLS, Islington; the EAST LONDON, or RoyalTY THEATRE, near Welclose Square; the WEST LONDON THEATRE, in Tottenham Street; the ADELPHI THEATRE, in the Strand; and the OLYMPIC THEATRE, in Wych Street. The two latter are opened, under a license from the Lord Chamberlain, during the six winter months, and the six former under licenses granted by the magistrates of their respective counties, (according to an Act of the 25th Geo. II.) which are in force the year round; of which privilege some avail themselves. Easter Monday is the grand epoch when all are opened for the summer season, which terminates about October or November; but some of them re-open about Christmas, and continue their winter season till Passion-week. They all commence the entertainments at half-past six or seven o'clock in the evening, and conclude about eleven. The prices of admission are the same in all: boxes 4s., pit 2s., gallery 1s., except the Cobourg, which has an additional tier

of boxes at 3s.; and most of them take half-price. The Lord Chamberlain's license authorises entertainments more nearly approaching the regular drama than that given by the magistrates. The performances of all are, nevertheless, similar.

This Theatre was built by the late Philip Astley, Esq., an uneducated but enterprising man, with a strong mind and acute understanding, remarkable for eccentric habits, and peculiarity of manner, who built at different periods, at his own cost, and for his own purposes, nineteen theatres. As the history of the Amphitheatre is almost identified with that of his life, a short memoir of him will not be inapplicable; especially as it will exhibit an example of industry and perseverance profitable for imitation.

He was a man of strong muscular powers, above six feet in height, of an imposing appearance, but in the latter part of his life he grew extremely corpulent. His voice was perfectly stentorian. He was born at Newcastle-under-Line in 1742, and came to London with his father, who was a cabinet-maker, in 1753 or 4, and worked at his father's business till 1759, when he enlisted in the 15th, or Eliott's own light horse. By his scrupulous attention to discipline, and his undaunted bravery, he became a great favourite in the regiment, and was particularly noticed by General Eliott (afterwards Lord Heathfield). He served seven years during the German war, with high military reputation, and obtained the rank of serjeant-major; but on the return of the army from the Continent he solicited and obtained his discharge, with a most honourable certificate of service.\* Having wit-

\* He was always a remarkably expert horseman, and in consequence of the skill he acquired in the equestrian menage, was speedily made one of the rough riders, teacher and breaker to the regiment. His regiment,



nessed, while in the army, the performances of an itinerant equestrian named Johnson, he practised that species of riding during his service, and, when discharged, made it his profession. General Elliot gave him a charger, as a testimony of the high opinion he entertained of him; and with this horse and another which he purchased in Smithfield market he commenced his equestrian performances in an open field, near the Halfpenny Hatch, Lambeth, for the gratuitous, but trifling contributions of those who were attracted to the spot by his hand-bills. To defray the expense of his exhibitions, he worked at the cabinet business during the time unemployed in his new professional pursuits, and also broke in horses. In process of time he engaged part of a large timber-yard, (upon the site of which the present Amphitheatre stands,) inclosed it circularly with boarding, erected seats for an audience, with a pent-house roof, sufficient to pro-

during the German war, being ordered for foreign service, while the cavalry horses were being landed at Hamburgh, from flat-bottomed boats, one of the animals from fright sprang into the sea, and Astley, who observed it, seeing that the tide was carrying it rapidly away, plunged in, and catching the bridle, swam back with the horse, and reached the shore with it in safety before the boat from which the horse had leaped. He was made serjeant, as a reward for this act of intrepidity. Again, at the disembarkation of the troops at the mouth of the Weser, he was the principal means of preserving several men and horses from imminent danger, from the accidental oversetting of a boat. At the battle of Emsdorff he took a royal standard of France, though his horse was shot under him; but being remounted, he brought off his prize, in despite of an escort of the enemy's infantry, at least ten in number, by whom he was wounded. At the battle of Friedburg, when in the advanced guard, which he had the honour of commanding, he personally assisted, under a very heavy fire, in bringing off the hereditary Prince of Brunswick, when his Highness was wounded within the enemy's lines. — These circumstances are extracted from the *certificate of service* given to him with his discharge.

tect them from the rain, while he performed in a rope ring, under no roof but the canopy of heaven. Here he performed during the mornings; in the evenings he exhibited a Learned Horse, *Ombres Chinoises*, sleight of hand, &c. &c., in a large room, No. 22, Piccadilly; and his profits, through rigid economy, eventually enabled him to lend his landlord, the timber merchant, 200*l.*, the whole of the yard, and the timber in it, being mortgaged to him as a security. The borrower left England upon receiving the money, and was never more heard of. Astley, in due course of time, becoming possessed of the property by legal investiture, sold the timber, and, with money thus raised, increased by 60*l.*, the produce of a large diamond ring which he found at the foot of Westminster Bridge, and which was never advertised by the loser, he erected (1780) a roofed building, with a commodious auditory, which he advertised to be opened as the *Amphitheatre Riding House*; that building he enlarged at different periods, as his profits enabled him, till he covered the whole extent of the ground in his possession. The prices of admission were, boxes 2*s.* 6*d.*, pit 1*s.*, gallery 6*d.* The performances were at night. Astley having been informed that the Royal Circus, which was then building, would be opened with musical pieces and dancing, as well as horsemanship, to keep pace with his new rival, he added a stage and scenery to his riding circle, and opened on the subsequent Easter Monday with similar entertainments; but not being licensed pursuant to the Act 25th Geo. II., he was imprisoned: he obtained, however, both his release and a license, through the late Lord Thurlow, to whose daughters he taught riding. He then enlarged his theatre, and called it the ROYAL GROVE, from the auditory being painted to resemble a grove; and, upon a future alteration of the edifice, he again changed the name to the AMPHITHEATRE OF ARTS: the admission prices

were now, for boxes 4s., pit 2s., and gallery 1s. That building, on the 16th August, 1794, was, during Astley's abode on the Continent, as a volunteer with the army,\* burnt to the ground. Unappalled by the calamity, although his property was scarcely, if at all, insured, he obtained leave of absence, came over to England, rebuilt his Amphitheatre, and opened it on the succeeding Easter Monday, 1795, under the designation of the ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE; his present Majesty, then Prince of Wales, and the Duke of York, patronising it. On Sept. 2, 1803, this building (very little secured by insurance,) was also totally destroyed by fire, while Astley was in Paris.† With his accustomed fortitude, perseverance, and celerity, he erected a new Amphitheatre, time enough to open on Easter Monday, 1804. He had

\* Astley always kept up his military character. During one hard winter he laid out a considerable sum of money in providing every soldier in his own troop, while upon continental service, one flannel jacket, with a *shilling* sewed in one of the pockets, needles, thread, worsted balls, bits of woollen cloth, and many other trifling articles essential to a common soldier, but not to be easily obtained on foreign service. At the siege of Valenciennes he took a piece of ordnance, drawn by four horses, with which the French, who had captured it, were bringing it away. The Duke of York, as a reward for his gallantry, gave him the horses, which he sold by auction on the field, and expended the produce in providing comforts for the soldiers of his favourite troop, and others.

† He had an Amphitheatre in Paris, another in Peter Street, Dublin, for which he had a patent from the Irish Parliament. Astley built nineteen theatres at different periods, the last of which was the Olympic Pavilion (now theatre) in Wych Street, in 1806, which he afterwards sold to R. W. Elliston, Esq., the present lessee of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. The patent of his Irish Theatre expired several years ago, and the property went from him. His Paris Theatre was, during the Revolution, seized and made barracks of, but the property was restored to him during the consulate of Buonaparte; and it is said that a rental was paid for all the time it had been kept from him.

previously leased the property to his son, the late Mr. John Astley, who in his youth was esteemed the first equestrian in Europe. He granted also a lease of the new Amphitheatre to his son, who continued lessee during the remainder of his father's life. Mr. A., senior, went to Paris to dispose of the Amphitheatre he had built there, and died Oct. 20, 1814, aged 72, and was buried in the cemetery called *Père la Chaise*.\* On the 19th of Oct., 1821, his son, who went to Paris for his health, died in the same house, chamber, and bed, where his father breathed his last. After Mr. John Astley's death, Mr. William Davis,† who had long been joint lessee with him, conducted the concern, for himself, the widow of Mr. Astley, jun., and her late husband's creditors, till the end of the season in the present year 1824, when the lease expired, and the premises reverted to the persons to whom Mr. Astley, sen., bequeathed it. The ground lease will expire in thirteen years, and then it devolves to the ground landlord. The rental of the last lease was 1000*l.* per annum.

DESCRIPTION.—The front, which is plain and of brick, stands laterally with the houses in Bridge Road, Lambeth, a short distance from Westminster Bridge, the access to the back part of the premises being in Stangate Street. There is a plain wooden portico, the depth of which corresponds

\* Astley for many years had been in the habit of retiring to bed before six o'clock and rising at five, in all seasons. He left a respectable, but encumbered fortune, devised by will among various branches of his family.

† This gentleman, who has by industry and economy realised a handsome competency, exclusively of establishing in the world a numerous, respectable, and amiable family, is allowed to be the most scientific master of the manege in the kingdom.

with the width of the pavement, and is lighted by large gas lanterns. This leads to the boxes and pit; the gallery entrance is lower down the street, and separated from the front by several houses.

The boxes are approached by a plain staircase, at the head of which is the lobby, which is 11 feet 9 inches in depth, and about 60 feet wide, with passages behind the side boxes, from which are staircases leading to the upper boxes: at the back of the lobby is a fruit room. There are long seats attached to the wall of the lobby, all round, and in the centre is a large and handsome patent stove. The backs of the boxes, from about 5 feet above the floor, are entirely open to the lobby, which is customary at most of the minor theatres. The form of the auditory is elliptical, and it is lit by a very large cut-glass lustre, and chandeliers with bell lamps: gas is the medium of illumination used all over the premises.

There is one continued row or tier of boxes round the Auditory, above the central part of which is the gallery, and there is a half tier of upper boxes on each side, with slips over them. There are three private boxes on each side adjoining the proscenium; one attached to each extremity of the gallery, and one at each end of the orchestra. The floor of the ride, within the auditory, is earth and saw-dust, where a ring or circle, 44 feet in diameter, is bounded by a boarded inclosure, about 4 feet in height; the curve of which, next the stage, forms the outline of the orchestra, and the remainder that of the pit, behind which is an extensive lobby and a bar for refreshments.

The Proscenium is large and moveable, for the convenience of widening and heightening the stage, which is, perhaps, the largest and most convenient in London, and is terminated by immense platforms or floors, rising above



each other, and extending the whole width of the stage. These are exceedingly massive and strong. The horsemen gallop and skirmish over them, and they will admit a carriage, equal in size and weight to a mail coach, to be driven across them. They are, notwithstanding, so constructed as to be placed, and removed, in a short space of time, by manual labour and mechanism. When exhibited they are masked with scenery, representing battlements, heights, bridges, mountains, &c. There are several very considerable inlets and outlets to and from the stage and the stables, which communicate with each other.

The Stables, which range over a very extensive space of ground on one side of the stage, to the right from the auditory, are very capacious; and when they are wholly occupied by the numbers of beautiful horses attached to the establishment, constitute a most gratifying exhibition. The horses are kept in the highest order, and attended by several experienced grooms.

THE END.



60.27'



- a Green room
- b Dressing room
- c Bath room to the
- d Bath room
- e Bath room
- f Bath room

- g Primary stair
- h Stair
- i Stair to the
- j Stair to the
- k Stair to the

Charles Street

Stair

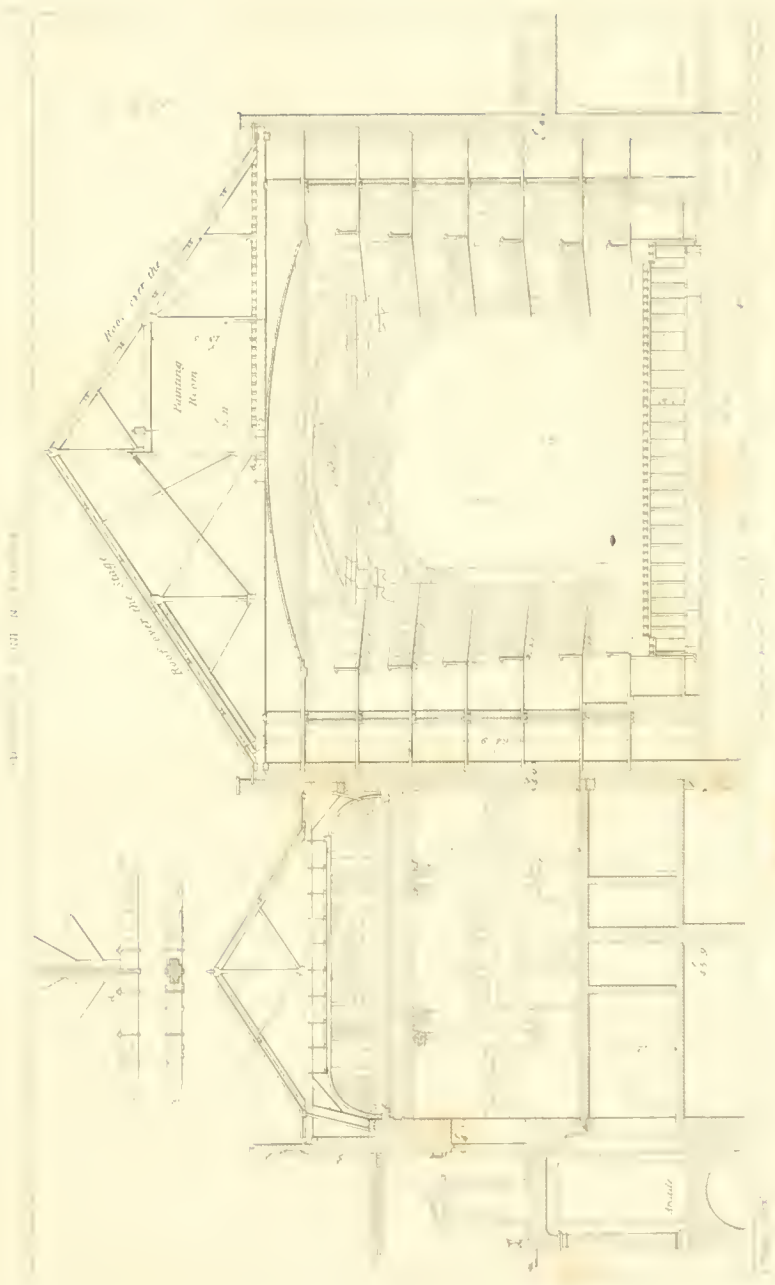
General Arcade

Scape

Charles Street

60.27'











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